Annual Museum Survey 2023:

National Report

Accessible PDF format

museum development england

Logo of Museum Development England

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About the Annual Museum Survey 2023

Through data submitted by participating museums, the Annual Museum Survey provides insights into the sector's health as well as the challenges and opportunities it faces.
By benchmarking data generated every year, we have been able to spotlight past and current trends such as the impact of the pandemic and the museums' post-pandemic recovery.
This year, we tell a story of the (post-)pandemic legacy as well as of increasing pressure on the sector due to the cost-of-living crisis, energy crisis and rising inflation.

☑ **2023 Museums participation in the survey:**
701 nationally **= 57%** national response rate

The annual dataset helps understand the state of England's non-national museums including independent, local authority and university-governed organisations.

We invite you to learn more about our research methodology and the survey scope and also to familiarise yourself with the information on weighting, sample sizes and further context.
This detailed information can be found on the following three pages.

The survey helps us understand the museum sector's situation in terms of...

- **Opening hours & Audiences**
- **Use of online tools & methods**
- **Workforce & Volunteering**
- **Finance**

Table of contents

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If you are using its online interactive version, you can click on the page number which will take you to the report's part of your choice.

This year's survey headlines

Annual Museum Survey 2023 key findings

Recap: What did we find in 2021/22?

Key observations on opening and audience

Visit numbers in 2021/22 were 45% lower than those reported in 2019/20 and average occupancy was 50% across the year. However, the size of museum (based on visitor size bands established pre-pandemic) was a key factor in the degree to which museums 'bounced-back'.

Key observations on digital and education

The rise of digital engagement during the pandemic appeared to have paid dividends with website visits and social media followers higher than pre-pandemic levels, but the shift to digital delivery for education sessions reduced significantly over the last 12 months. Overall engagement with education providers was down at nearly half of pre-pandemic levels, although local authority museums appeared to be further on in their recovery here.

Key observations on workforce and volunteering

A sizeable reduction in volunteer capacity was reported with volunteers down 16% and the number of hours these volunteers contributed down by a concerning 37%. Organisations which operate multiple museums appeared to have been most affected.

Key observations on finance

The financial picture was split, with a divide in museums reporting an increase or decrease in income. Covid emergency financial measures might have alleviated the immediate financial impacts but more than half of museums reported a rise in expenditure.

Context: What happened in 2022/23?

The war in Ukraine and political changes have had an impact on everyone

As the impact of the pandemic eased somewhat, a set of new challenges presented themselves due to a combination of the war in Ukraine and changes in the national political landscape.

Energy prices soared

In spring 2022, not long after Russia invaded Ukraine, wholesale gas prices increased significantly which resulted in a huge rise in the cost of energy bills across the UK.

High inflation caused by a series of shocks to the economy

Inflation jumped from 0.4% in April 2021 to over 11% in October 2022, with food price inflation being a particular problem. The Bank of England responding with a series of increases to the base rate, resulting in a steep rise in mortgage rates and borrowing costs.

Pandemic restrictions were no longer in place

Museums had to deal with national and local restrictions during 2020/21 and 2021/22.
There were no restrictions in 2022/23.

Pandemic-specific funding and support ended

In the previous two years, museums received funding to support them through the pandemic.
This included the furlough scheme, local authority Covid-19 support grants and the Culture Recovery Fund.

This year's survey headlines: What have we found in 2022/23?

Whilst opening hours are close to pre-pandemic levels, visit numbers are still down

97% of museums opened and hours opened were down just 6% overall compared to 2019/20. Visit numbers were much higher than the previous year, but still down 18% on pre-pandemic levels.

Museums are generally in a stronger position with their use of digital

Website visits are up 50% on pre-pandemic levels and social media followers across a range of platforms are up 40%. However, use of digital to deliver education sessions dropped in 2022/23.

Staffing is unchanged and volunteer levels are getting closer to pre-pandemic levels

Over half of museums with paid staff made new employee or contract hires in 2022/23. Volunteer numbers are down just 5% on pre-pandemic levels although hours contributed by these volunteers is still 16% down. There are 4 volunteers to every employee in museums.

There are signs that the financial landscape is beginning to shift for museums

After a small increase in reported income during 2020/21 and 2021/22, income dropped by 3% in 2022/23 at the same time that expenditure increased by 10%.

Many expect the cost of living crisis to negatively impact on their museum

Open-text feedback revealed the impact of the cost of living crisis on audience numbers, staff, volunteers and finances in museums. Those still in fixed price energy deals expect things to get worse over the next year.

Snapshot: 2022/23

Museums overview

55% Museums that charge for admissions

31% Wholly volunteer-run museums

57% Museums which are independent

71% Museums in urban areas

Workforce and volunteering

41% Museums hiring staff or contracts

4:1 Volunteers to paid staff ratio

5% Volunteer numbers down on 19/20*

14% Volunteer hours down on 19/20*

Audiences

19% Opening hours up on previous year*

49% Museums not open or fewer than 10k visits

52% Visitor numbers up on previous year*

93% Museums providing on-site education sessions

Finance

29% Museums with less than £25k turnover

64% Museums reporting increased expenditure

4% On-site donations down on 19/20*

3% Admissions income down on 19/20*

* = Median % change based on constant sample. Other statements present percentage of museums affected

The cost of living crisis is impacting on museums in multiple ways, and the expectation is that things will get worse before they get better

Impact on visitors

- Some free museums have seen an increase in visitors and free events are particularly popular
- Some have seen a drop in paid for admissions/events/exhibitions
- Schools are struggling to fund visit costs, particularly transport
- Visitor demographics and behaviour are changing and are increasingly difficult to predict

> *Cost of living and energy crisis has led to customers booking less tickets for less events. Forecasting is more difficult because booking patterns have changed. Customers are booking later and are risk averse.*

Impact on finances

- Higher expenditure, particularly on energy bills, materials, staff costs, travel expenses, etc.
- Energy costs still on fixed energy deals expect to see significant increases in the near future when these end
- Need to increase ticket prices is in conflict with desire to keep prices low to encourage attendance, particularly from diverse audiences
- Visitor spend is down and some museums have seen a drop in donations

> *Electricity charges rose by 135% so no heating on during the last winter which puts the staff, volunteers, visitors, collection and building at risk.*

Impact on staff and volunteers

- Some staff are struggling personally with cost of living
- Some leaving for higher paid/closer jobs
- Harder to recruit seasonal staff and staff to lower paid roles, particularly retail, catering and cleaning
- Some volunteers are returning to paid jobs or struggle to afford to travel to the museum

> *Many of our volunteers started to claim travel expenses because of the cost of living. In fact our expenses increased by 50% in 2022/2023. One of our part time members of staff was struggling financially because of the cost of living crisis, so we had to review contracts to see if we could increase their hours.*

Opening hours and visits in 2022/23

The majority of museums opened in 2022/23

Just 3% did not open at all, even fewer than the 8% in 2021/22

For those that did open, the number of hours open over the year was up again on the previous year

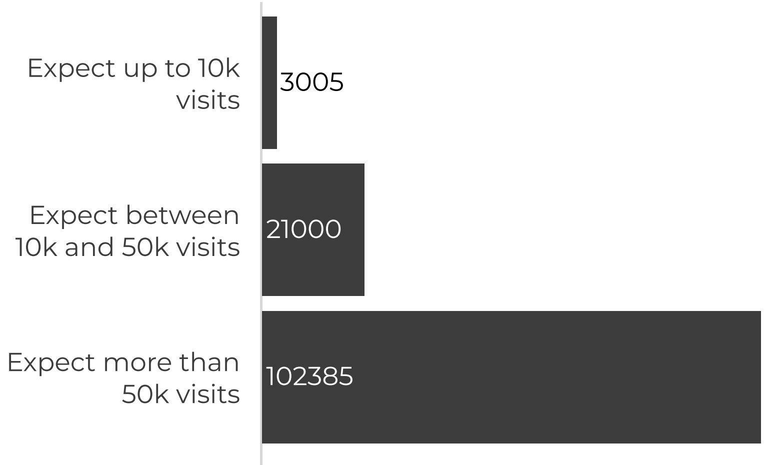
It is now just 6% lower than the levels of 2019/20

Visit numbers were 52% higher than those reported in 2021/22

But still 18% lower than visitor levels in 2019/20

The difference in scale of museums can be seen when looking at visitor numbers by their 'size', i.e. how many visitors they would typically expect in a year

Median visitors in 2022/23 by museum size



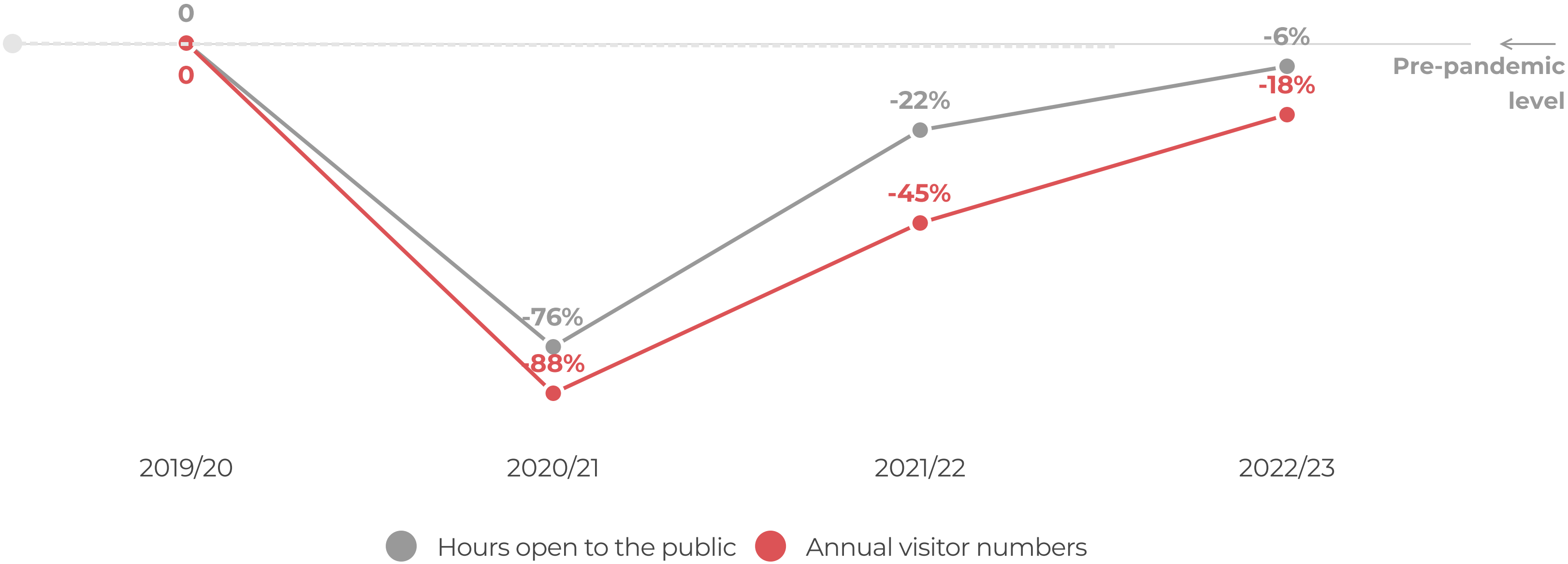
The majority (93%) of museums provided on-site sessions for education providers

The number of providers engaged is now just 11% lower than the level in 2019/20 (47% down last year)

Opening and visits in 2022/23: Getting back to pre-pandemic levels

Visitor numbers have not yet recovered to the same extent as hours open to the public

Median change in hours and visits compared to 2019/20 level (constant sample)



On average, museums were open for 25 hours a week and had 11,150 annual visitors during 2022/23

Use of digital

Use of digital to deliver education and outreach sessions was lower in 2022/23

25% of museums offered digital education sessions in 2022/23, down from 31% in 2021/22. Number of participants engaged in this way was also lower.

Website visitors and social media followers continue to grow

Website visit numbers are 8% higher than the previous year and 50% higher than in 2019/20

The number of social media followers for museums is now 48% higher than it was in 2019/20

The larger the museum, the more likely they are to be using and growing digital in their organisation

Video conferencing

75% of museums with paid staff use video conferencing externally compared to 39% of volunteer-run museums

Digital tools for increasing income

80% of the largest museums use online ticketing compared to 35% of micro museums

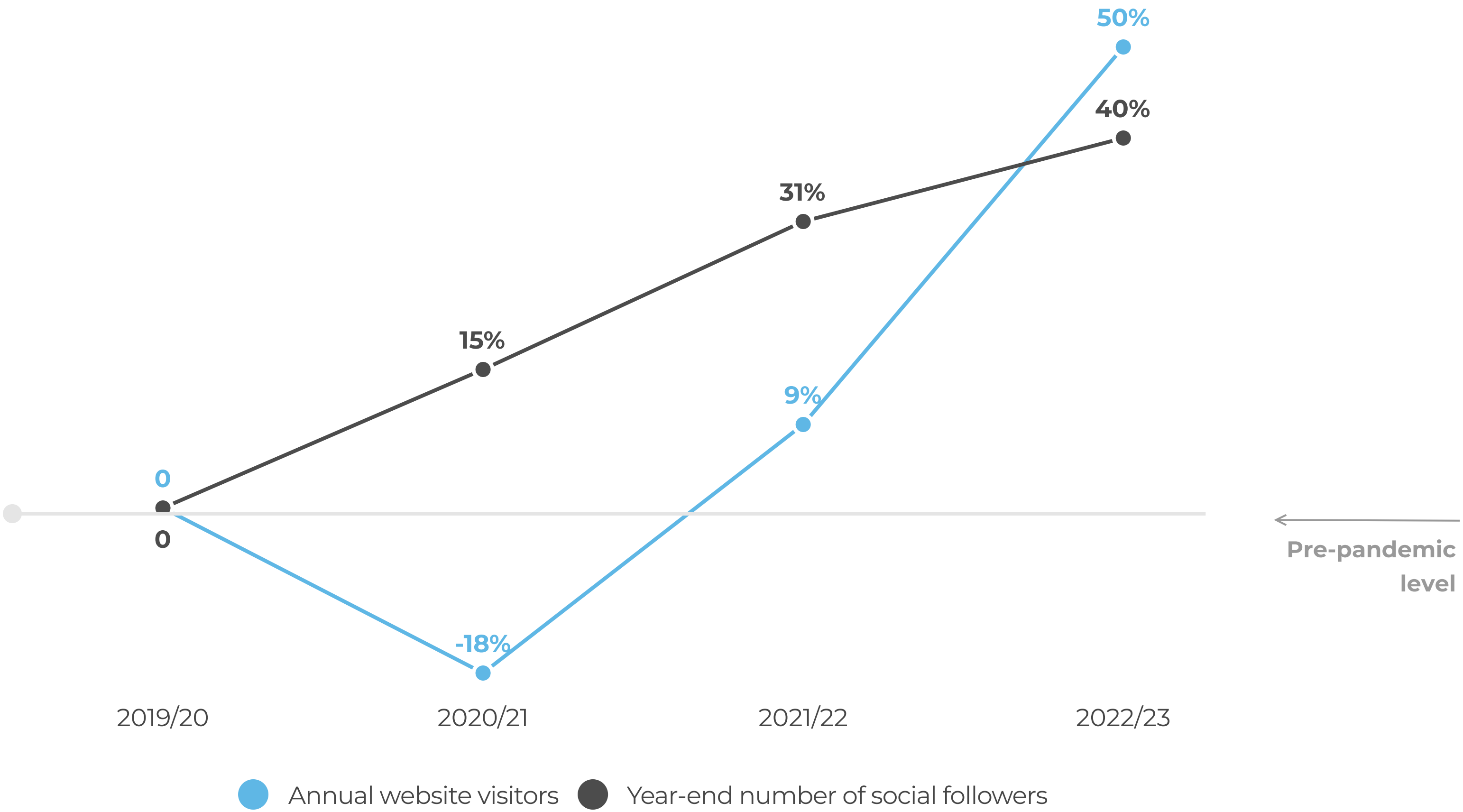
Digital tools for wider audience engagement

40% of organisations with multiple museum sites use virtual 360 tours compared to 11% of micro museums

Use of digital in 2022/23: Social following continues to rise

Website visits initially dropped during the pandemic, but increased significantly during 2022/23 (50% higher than pre-pandemic levels)

Median change in website visits and social followers compared to 2019/20 level (constant sample)



Finances

3 in 10 museums reported an annual turnover of less than £25k in 2022/23

Museums which charge for admissions were more likely to report an increase in income

56% self-reported that their income increased, compared to 46% that do not charge

Museums are most likely to receive contributed income or charitable giving

- 87% receive contributed or charitable income
- 36% receive earned income (e.g. admission, retail)
- 62% receive project grant income

On-site donations were just 4% down on 2019/20 levels

Income from on-site donations down 4% on 2019/20 and 45% up on the previous year (2021/22)

And museums were much more likely to feel that their expenditure increased during 2022/23

64% of museums indicated that expenditure increased compared to 14% that felt it decreased

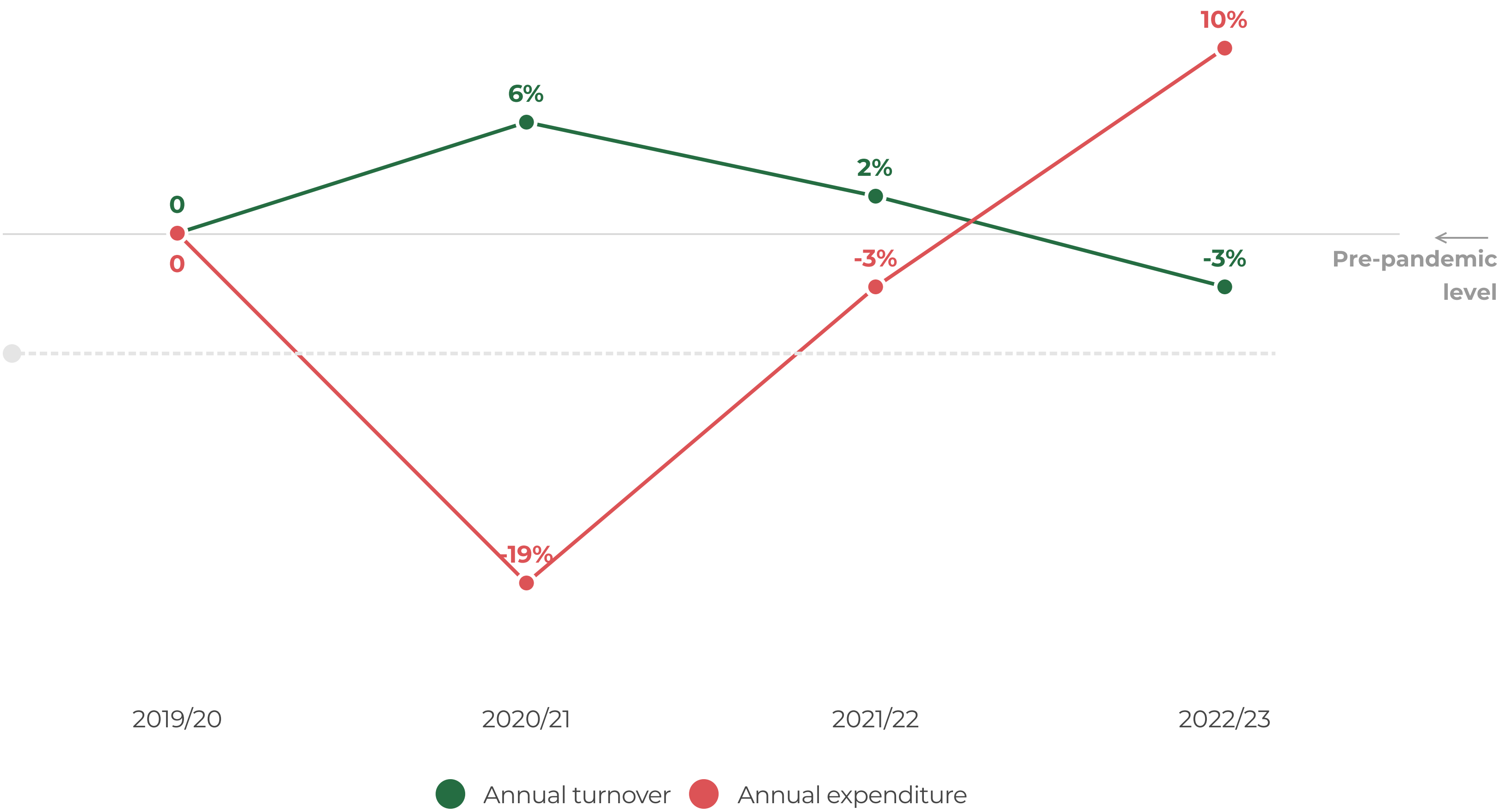
Qualitative feedback revealed concern for significantly increased running costs due to the cost of living crisis

"All extra income we generate from increased footfall and better quality public offer and improved engagement goes to cover the increases in expenditure. Effectively we are working very hard in order to stand still."

Finances in 2022/23: Income and expenditure crossover

Annual turnover has dropped below the pre-pandemic level for the first time, whilst annual expenditure is now 10% higher than it was in 2019/20

Median change in turnover and expenditure compared to 2019/20 level (constant sample)



Staff and volunteers

There has been no overall change in staffing levels over the last three years

Median staff numbers range from 3 in micro museums to 28 in the large/largest

55% of museums with paid staff hired employees or contract work during 2022/23

- 29% have made hires for contract work
- 30% have hired staff in existing posts
- 24% have hired staff in new posts

3 in 10 museums are volunteer-run

52% of micro museums are wholly volunteer-run

And virtually all museums rely on volunteers to some degree

4:1 There are 4 volunteers for every 1 employee

34% of museums have more than 50 volunteers

Volunteer numbers are now just 5% down on the levels of 2019/20

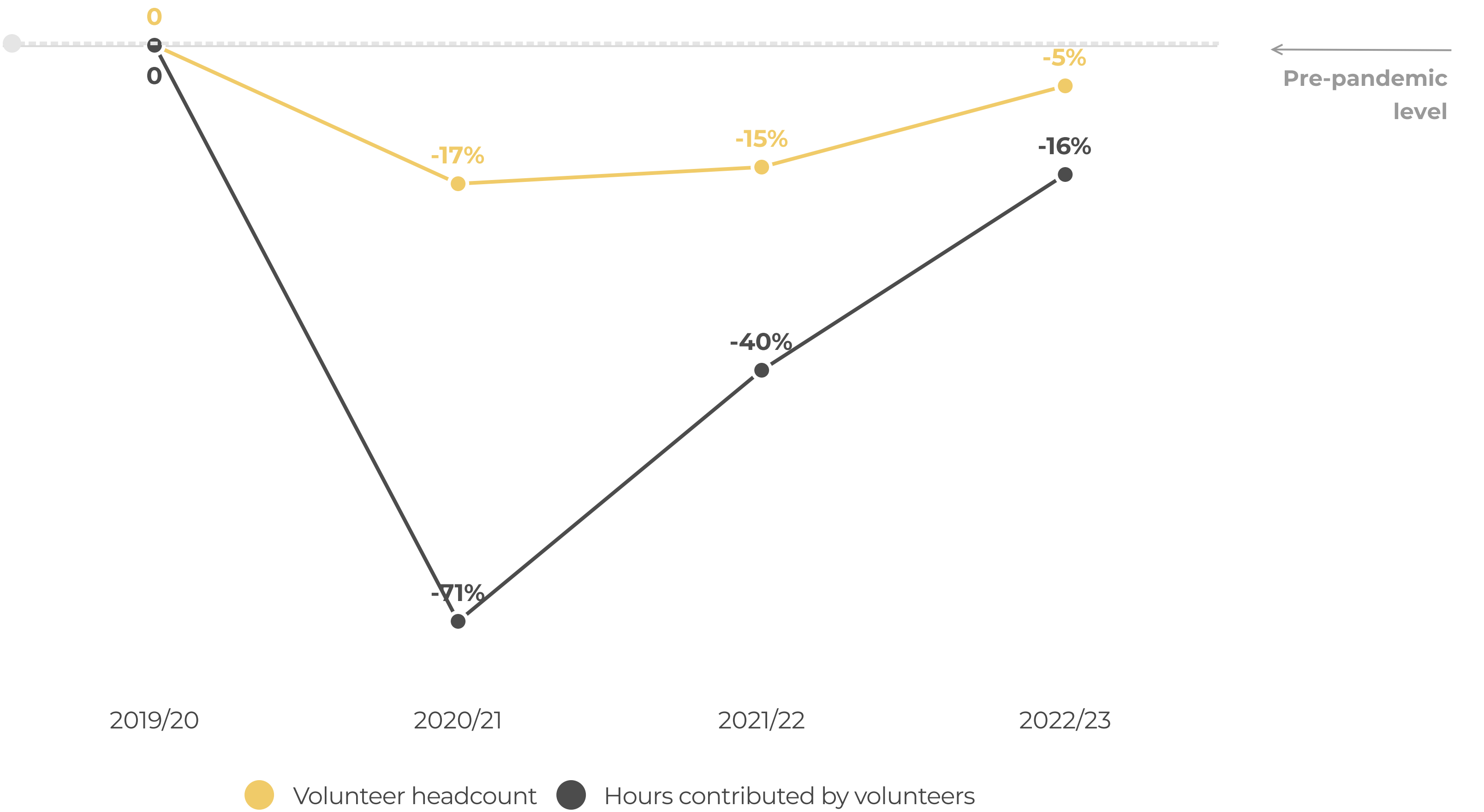
Contributed hours are still down by 14%

Museums are more likely to feel recruitment for new volunteers has gone up (43%) than down (14%) over the last year

Volunteers in 2022/23: Getting back to pre-pandemic levels

Number of volunteers is close to pre-pandemic levels, but hours they contribute has not yet recovered to the same extent

Median change in volunteer headcount and hours compared to 2019/20 level (constant sample)



How are volunteer-run museums doing?

Opening and visitors

- More than half (56%) of volunteer-run museums were closed or open for no more than 500 hours during 2022/23, compared to 10% of museums with paid staff
- Volunteer-run museums had an average (median) of 2,312 visitors: more than 6x lower than a museum with paid staff (15,006 visitors)

Digital

- The majority (90%) did not provide digital educational sessions
- Just 36% use Instagram and 20% video sharing platforms, compared to 87% and 67% respectively for those with paid staff

Volunteer health

- 38% rely on up to 25 volunteers
- Number of volunteers is 8% up on the previous year (2021/22)
- Volunteer hours contributed is up 16% over the same time period, but still 3% below pre-pandemic levels

Finances

- The annual turnover of a volunteer-run museum in 2022/23 was £13k
- 65% of volunteer-run museums reported increased expenditure during 2022/23, similar to museums with paid staff (64%)

Background:

Understanding the survey

Take me to...

Survey headlines | Background | About the museums | Opening | Audience engagement | Digital | Staff | Volunteers | Finances | Area snapshots

Understanding more about the approach

Scope:
The Annual Museum Survey includes data from independent, local authority and university museums. The scope of the survey should be considered when interpreting the findings in this report. Where sample sizes allow, this report provides analysis by governance type such as independent or local authority.

Strengthening the survey design:
We have retained the core set of Annual Museum Survey questions to reliably compare across years in order to better understand the impact of the pandemic on museums. However, to ensure a bigger and more reliable response to each question, we ask two questions: one checkbox question with bands and a follow-up numeric field if they are able to provide specific data. Additionally, open-ended text questions were tweaked to bring further qualitative insights to each of the four main survey's themes.

Ensuring as many museums as possible participated:
The survey data collection period was extended from the end of June to the beginning of July for any museums that had started the survey and provided a significant amount of data.

Accessing the survey questions:
All the survey questions and further guidance documents have been available from the dedicated Annual Museum Survey website throughout the data collection period and afterwards. If you would like to see these, please visit https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/what-we-do/annual-museum-survey/.

Economic impact of visitors calculation:
We use the Economic Impact Toolkit published by the Association of Independent Museums. Calculations used in this report account for local and day visitors but exclude overnight stays. For more information, go to: https://aim-museums.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Economic-Impact-Toolkit-2019.pdf

Understanding more about data preparation

Weighting:
Weighting is a statistical process which adjusts data by key variables to improve the accuracy of survey estimates. Data from the Annual Museum Survey has been weighted to ensure the findings are representative of the visitor size, governance type and regional location of museums.

Accounting for organisations with more than one museum site:
The Annual Museum Survey captures data from both single-site museums and organisations with more than one museum site. Data provided by 'multi-site' organisations is a mix of site-specific (for example, visit numbers) and organisation-wide (for example, staffing and finance).

Additional data sources:
Where possible, secondary data sources have been connected to the Annual Museum Survey dataset to provide additional analysis. These include rural-urban classifications, indices of deprivation, economic impact using the AIM calculator, volunteer value derived from ONS median pay by local authority and existing Accreditation data.

Updated size categories:
Throughout the report, any analysis by size categories is based on latest data on visit numbers. In recent years, these size categories were based on an assessment of a museum's size using pre-pandemic visitor numbers. Size categories include micro (less than 10,000 visitors per year), small-medium (between 10,000 and 50,000 visitors) and large-largest (more than 50,000).

Understanding more about data analysis

Sample sizes:
The number of museums able to provide data for each question is denoted by 'n' (for example, n=25). This is a weighted base size and is useful context when considering the findings, with more confidence the more responses there are.

Confidence in the survey results:
The level of response in each region is measured by the response rate and confidence interval. Across England, 57% of all museums in scope responded to the survey. The confidence interval (sometimes called the margin of error) is the plus-or-minus figure usually reported in market research and opinion polls.
The national confidence interval of 2.44% means that when interpreting headline results in the region, you can be confident that if every single museum responded the true figure would be 2.44 percentage points more or less than the figure reported here. The smaller the confidence interval, the more confidence in the results. This confidence level will vary depending on sample sizes for individual questions.

Analysis and interpretation of data:
Throughout the report, base sizes (n=) are provided to show the weighted sample size each statistic is based on. Where comparisons over time are made, these are based on a constant sample and are median numeric values. That is, the same museum responded in a previous year and the change between the two like-for-like values across those years is calculated. Additionally, when reporting any ranges within this report we use the 5th and 95th percentile, ignoring the minimum and maximum values as outliers. To understand significant findings and differences in this report, it is also important to take into account museums' different situations and operating contexts. For example, the extent to which they are reliant on volunteers will affect their survey response and they way they might interpret the figures provided.

About the museums

What do our Accredited museums look like?

Take me to...

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About the museums: What to look out for

Over half of accredited museums across England are independent

46% of all accredited museums are micro - they would usually get less than 10,000 visits in a typical year

Accredited museums are more likely to be located in urban areas (7 in 10)

Over half of museums would usually be open all year round

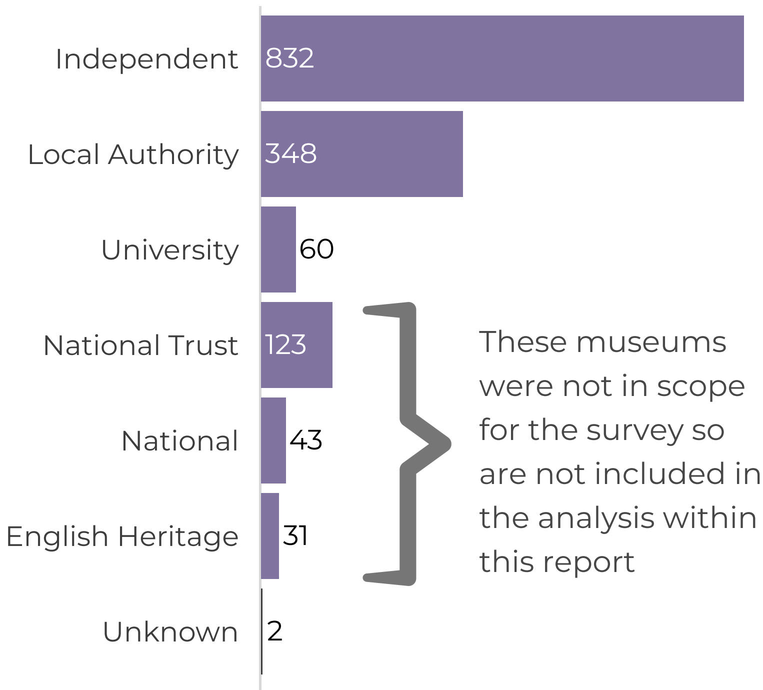
3 in 10 accredited museums are wholly run by volunteers

15% of museums are located in the top 20% most deprived areas of the country

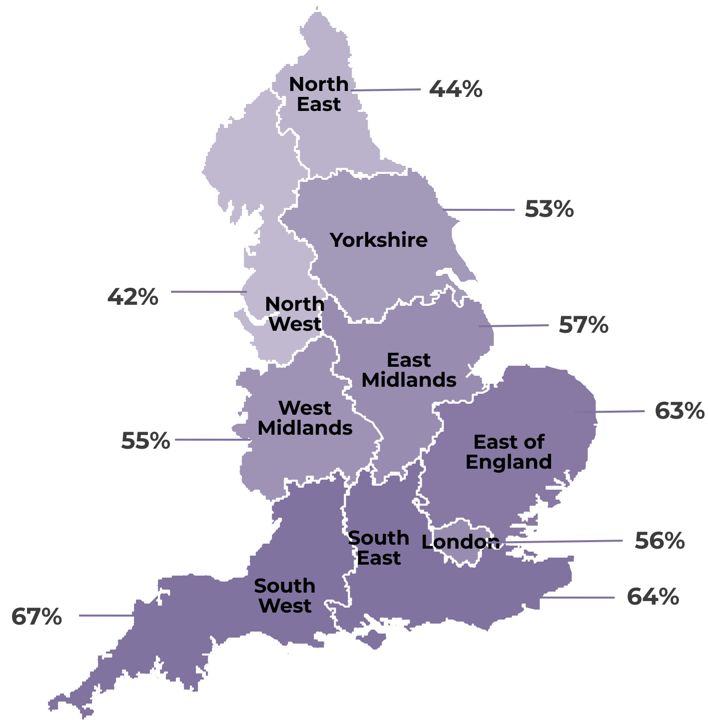
There are 1439 museums within the Accreditation scheme across England

Governance type and location data are drawn from Arts Council England's Accredited and Working Towards Accreditation (WTA) museums lists published in February 2023.

There are more independent museums than any other type



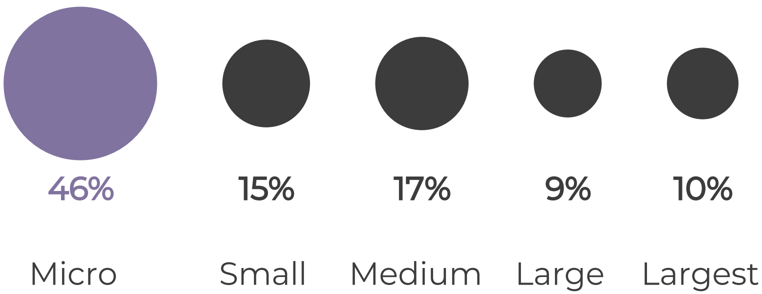
The South West has the highest proportion of independent museums at 67% of museums in the region



Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

Most museums across England are micro museums

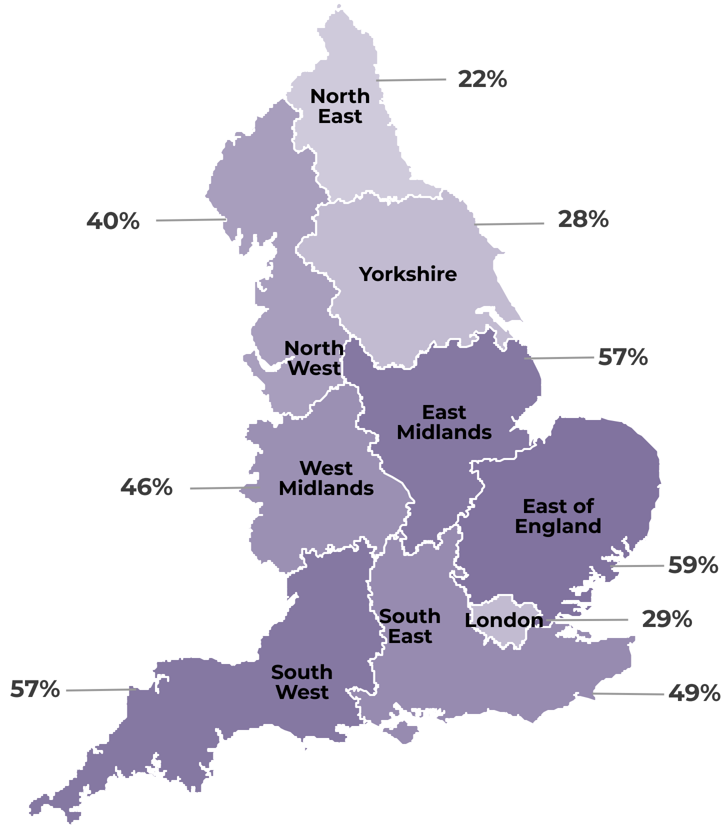
Size categories of non-National museums across England



The bands are:
Micro: **<10K**
Small: **10 - 20K**
Medium: **20 - 50K**
Large: **50 - 100K**
Largest: **>100K**

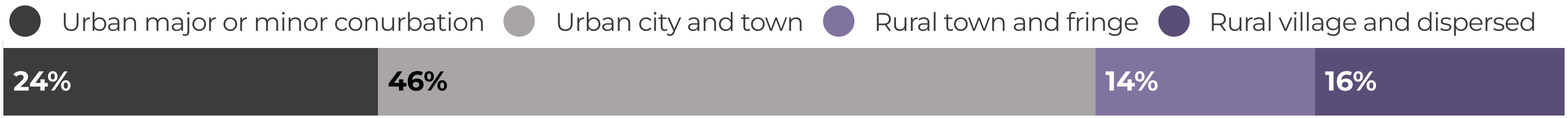
Size categories are used throughout this report and are determined by the total number of visitors each year. These are based on data provided by museums for 2022/23. For 3% of museums, the size category is unknown.

The East of England region has the highest proportion of micro museums (59%)

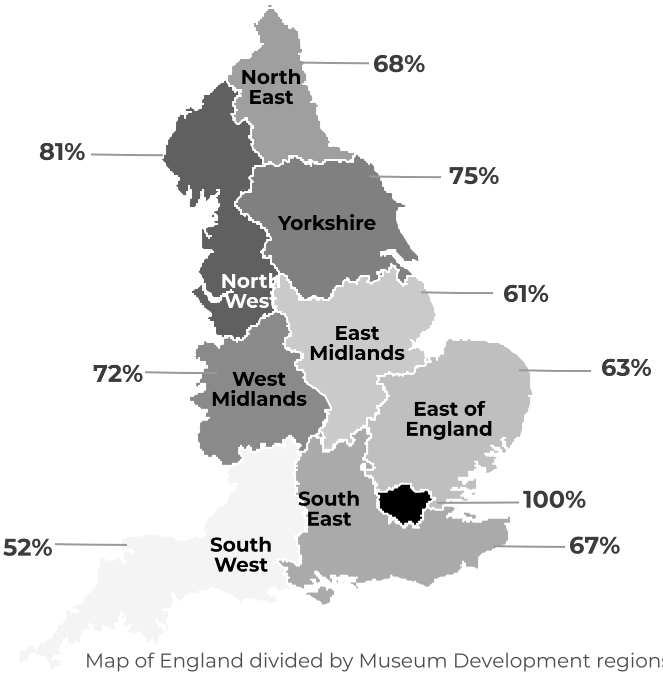


Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

7 in 10 museums across England are located in an urban area

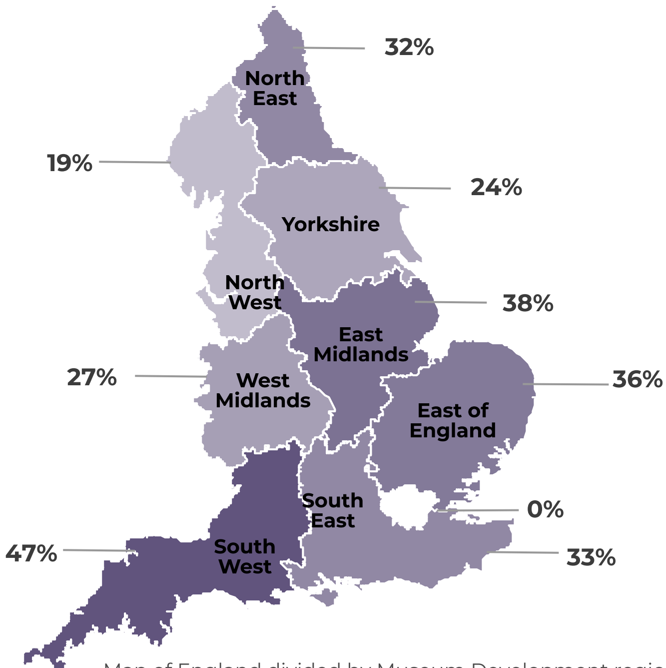


The North West has the highest proportion of urban museums, after London, at 81%



Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

The South West has the highest proportion of rural museums at 47%

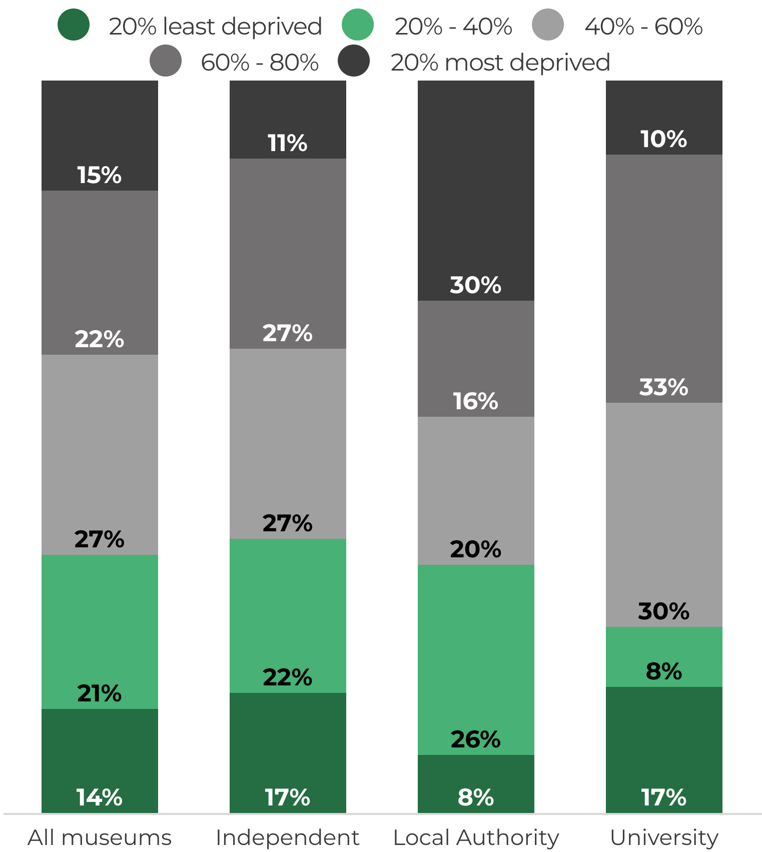


Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

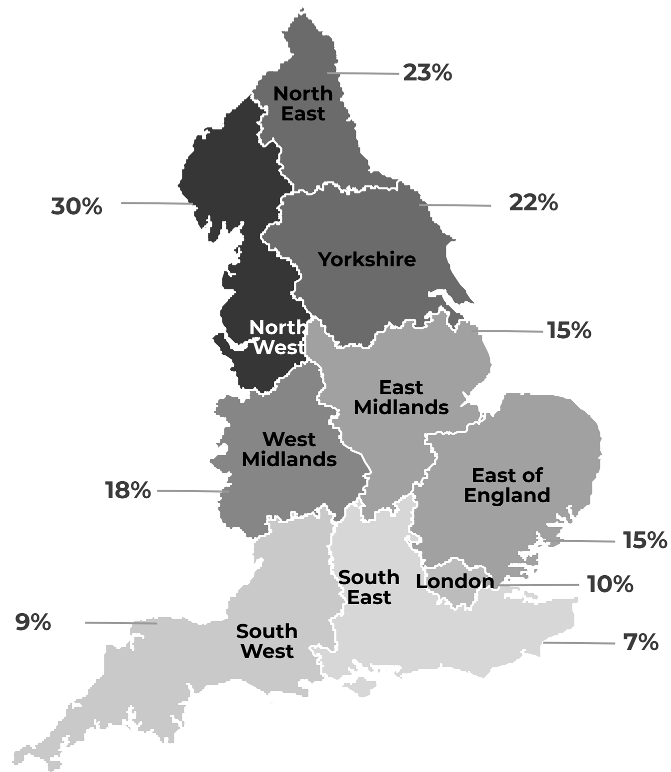
Rural/Urban classifications determined by postcode of museum using ONS classification: www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/geographicalproducts/ruralurbanclassifications/2011ruralurbanclassification

15% of museums are located in top 20% most deprived areas in the country

This rises to 30% of Local Authority museums



3 in 10 museums in the North West are located in the top 20% most deprived areas



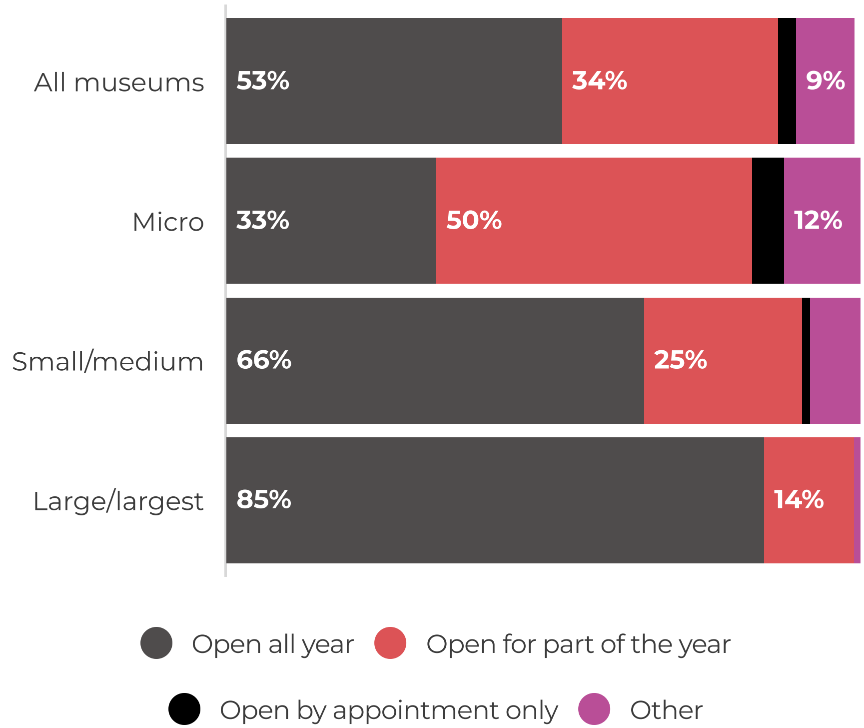
Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

Deprivation levels have been generated by matching museum site postcodes to Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) deciles at a Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level. (n = 1439)

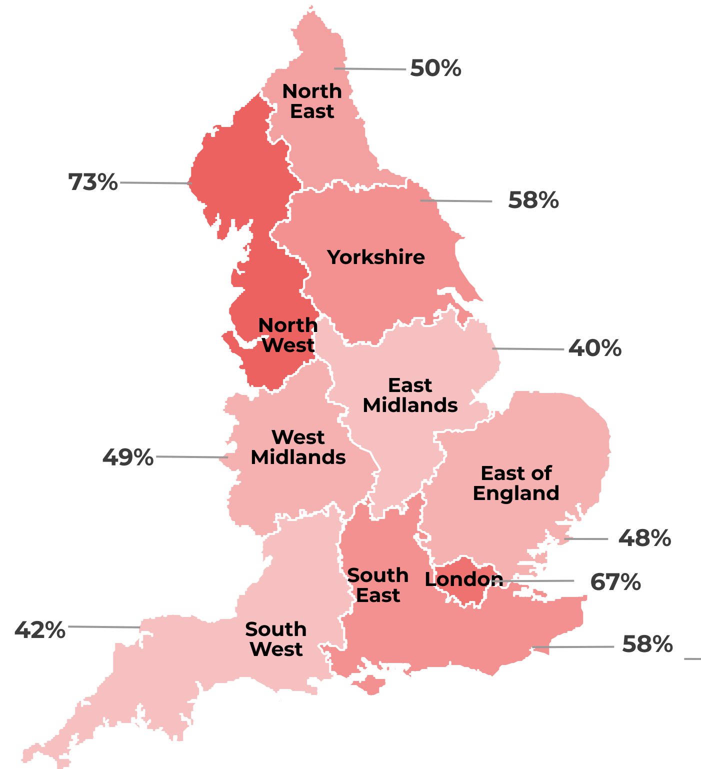
Over half of museums would usually be open all year round

53% of museums would class their usual opening hours as open all year round in 2022/23

The bigger the museum the more likely they are to usually open all year round



Museums in London and the North West are more likely to be open all year round



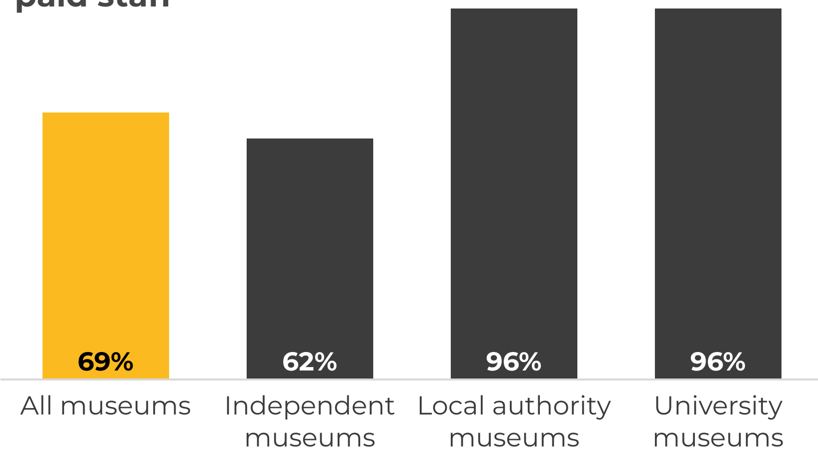
Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

"How would you class your museum's usual opening hours?"
(n = 700, Micro = 322, Small/Medium = 227, Large/Largest = 129)

3 in 10 Accredited museums are run by volunteers with no paid staff

69% of museums report having paid staff in 2022/23

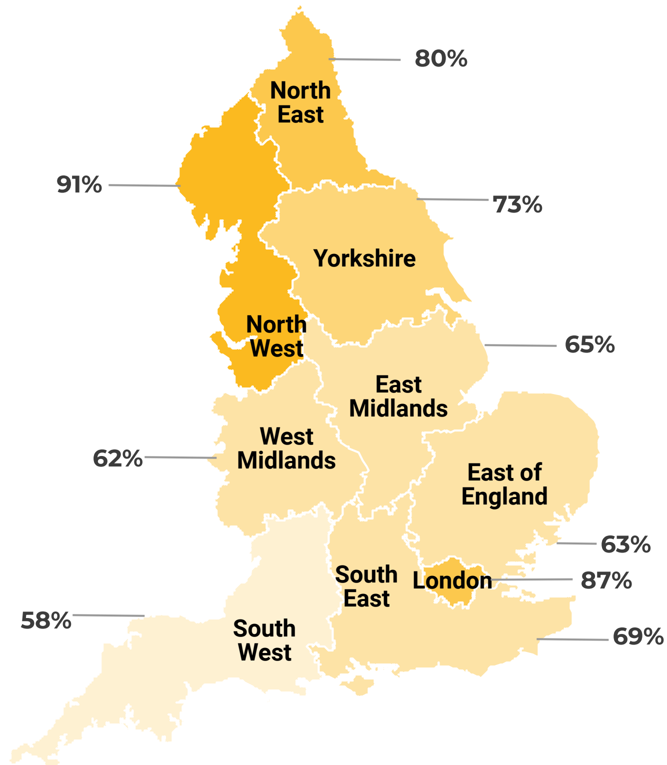
Independent museums are less likely than local authorities and universities to have paid staff



48% of micro museums have paid staff, compared to 97% of large/largest museums

86% of small/medium museums;
100% of organisations with multiple museum sites

91% of museums in the North West have paid staff compared to 58% in the South West



Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

"In 2022/23, did your museum have any...paid staff?"
(n = 556, Independent = 437, Local Authority = 93, University = 26)

More than two in five museums do not collect any equality and diversity information about their staff or regular volunteers

44%

Do not collect any equality and diversity information about staff or volunteers

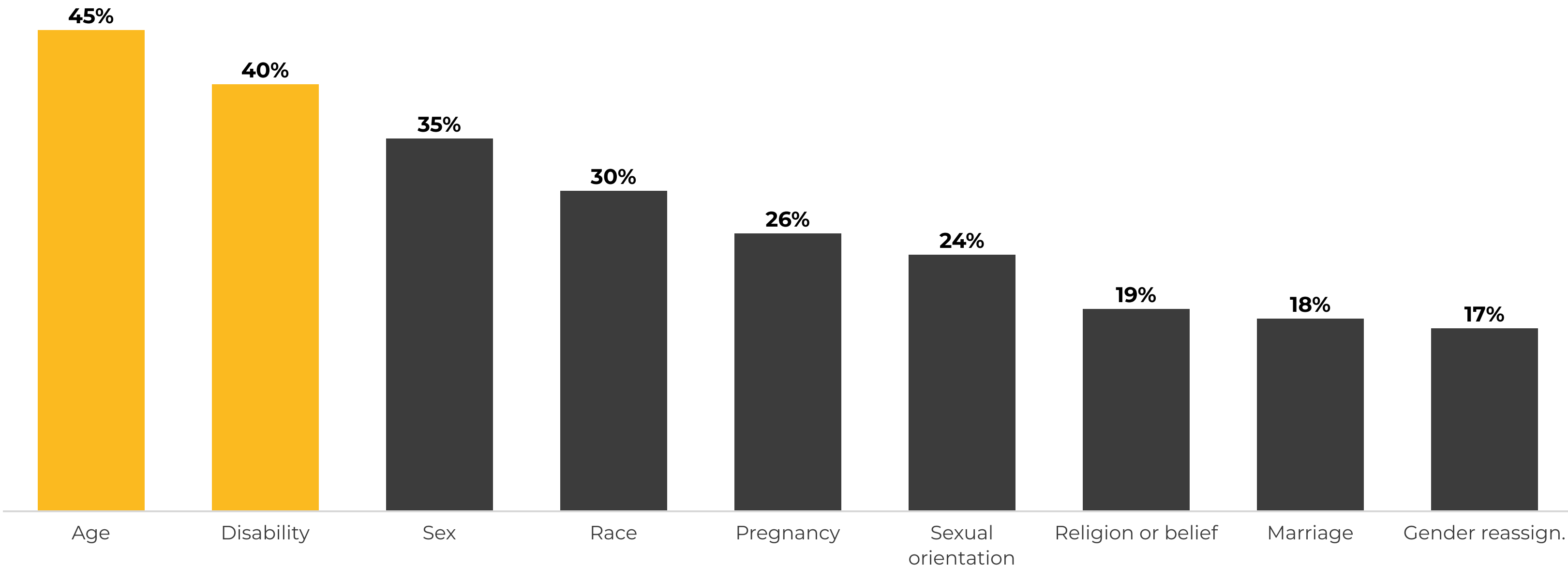
This is lower for organisations with multiple sites - **13%**

63%

Do not collect any equality and diversity information about volunteers

This is higher for volunteer-run museums - **71%**

Museums are most likely to collect information about age and disability



"In 2022/23, did you collect the following information about your paid staff and volunteers?" (n = 556)

Some museums are part of an organisation that has multiple museum sites

There are 99 of these organisations with more than one accredited museum site, representing 335 accredited (and Working Towards Accreditation) museums

60% are part of a Local Authority
35% are independent; 5% University

42% are in the North of England
Followed by the Midlands (20%)

61% reported an increase in income
Compared to 41% of micro museums

83% received regular public subsidy
Compared to 29% of micro museums

59% of those receiving project grant income did so from Arts Council

12% made staff redundancies
Compared to 2% of single site museums

75% made new hires or new contracts
Compared to 24% of micro museums

Have a 1:1 staff:volunteer ratio
Compared to 1:5 for single site museums

58% reported an increase in volunteer hours committed

50% reported an increase in new volunteers recruited

38% of all accredited museums are micro and independent

40% are in rural locations
Compared to 19% of all other museums

56% are wholly volunteer-run
Compared to 10% of all other museums

53% are normally open seasonally
Compared to 23% of all other museums

53% indicated that the level of volunteer hours committed was the same
Compared to 43% of all other museums

61% do not have an outdoor space
Compared to 46% of all other museums

65% do not use online ticketing
Compared to 32% of all other museums

50% have an annual turnover <£25k
Compared to 11% of all other museums

43% increased income in 2022/23
Compared to 51% of all other museums

36% charge for admissions all year
Compared to 45% of all other museums

60% increased expenditure
Compared to 68% of all other museums

All comparison data is for all other museums in the Annual Museum Survey sample

Opening in 2022/23

Analysis of opening hours and on-site visitors

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Opening in 2022/23: What to look out for

Just 3% of museums did not open in 2022/23, compared to over a third in 2020/21

Opening hours for museums up by around 20% on the previous year, but still 6% lower than the levels of 2019/20

Around half of museums either did not open or had less than 10,000 visitors

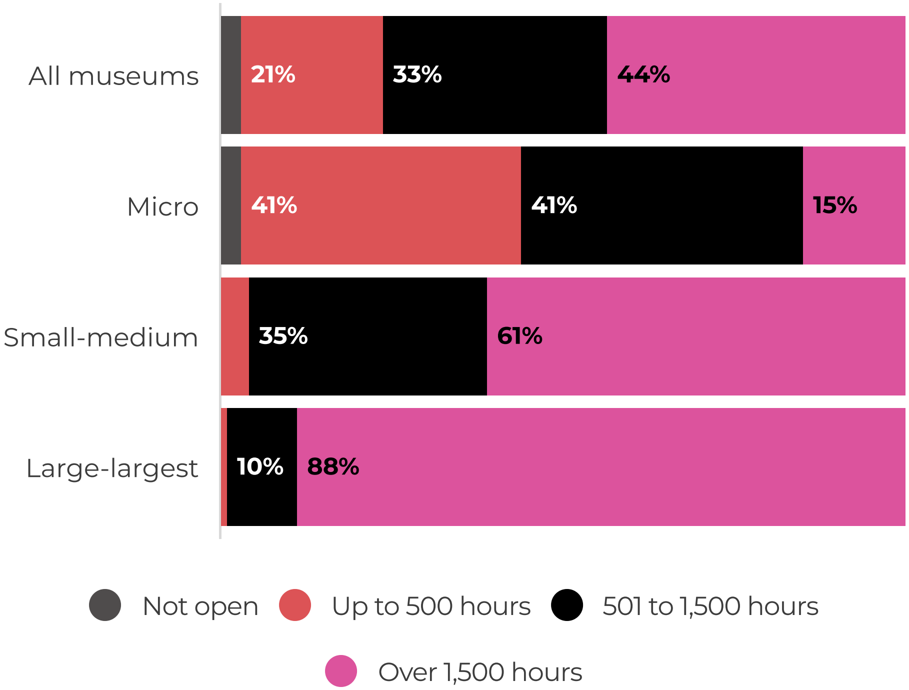
Visit numbers were 52% higher than those reported in 2021/22, but still 18% lower than the levels of 2019/20

""Audiences have returned more than we expected. Visitor figures are lower than pre-pandemic but we are encouraged by the increase in visitor numbers from the previous year."

Museums were more likely to be open during 2022/23

- **3% of museums did not open, compared to 33% during 2020/21 and 8% during 2021/22**
- **21% opened for up to 500 hours, 33% for 501 to 1,500 hours and 44% for over 1,500 hours**

The larger the museum the more hours they were likely to be open in 2022/23



1,314

Median opening hours in 2022/23

630 for micro museums;
1,632 for small/medium museums;
2,110 for large-largest museums

This is equivalent to

25 hours a week

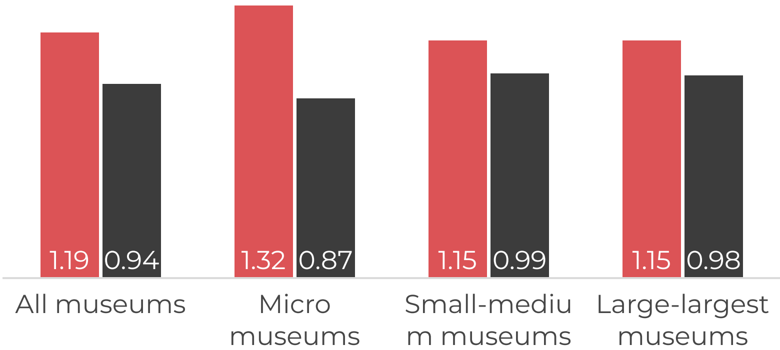
12 hours for micro museums;
31 hours for small/medium museums;
41 hours for large-largest museums

"How many hours was your museum open to the public in 2022/23?"
(n = 686, Micro = 320, Small-medium = 220, Large-largest = 123)

Opening hours up 19% on 21/22, but still 6% lower than 19/20

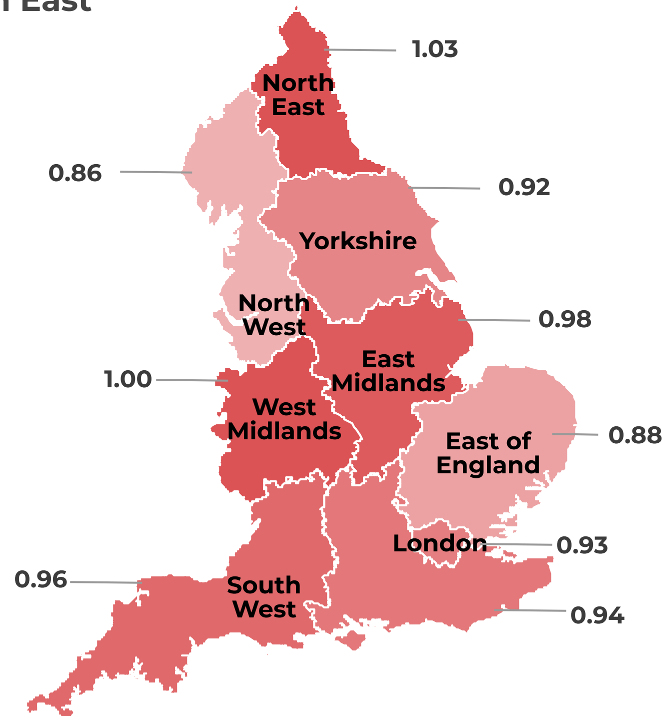
Opening hours in 2022/23 for volunteer-run museums are still down 23% on 2019/20, compared to 4% down for those with staff

Ratio of hours open in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 and 2019/20



"The biggest change has been around opening times. We are now a 5-day opening operation having always been 7-days in recent memory prior to Covid."

Ratio of hours open in 2022/23 compared to 2019/20 by region - significantly lower in the North East



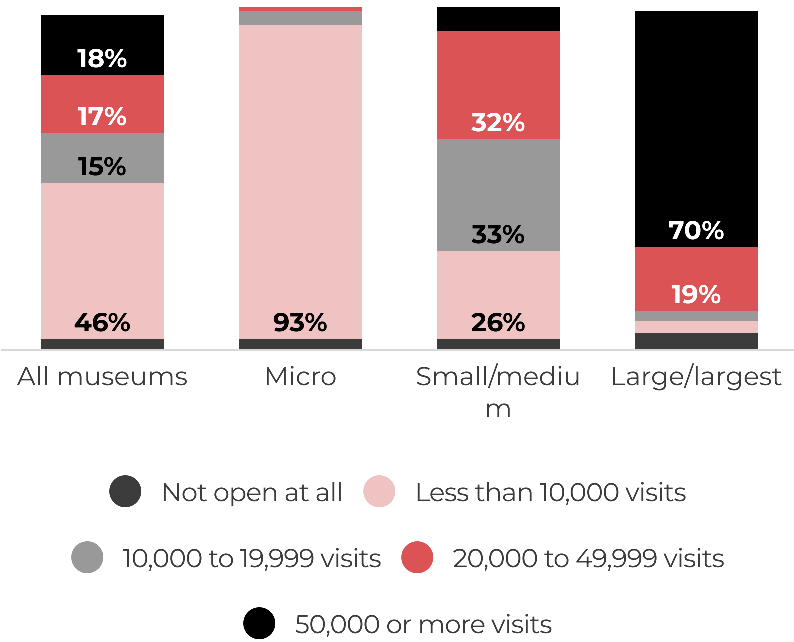
Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

"How many hours was your museum open to the public in 2022/23?"
(Constant sample = 265, Micro = 106, Small-Medium = 98, Large-Largest = 49)

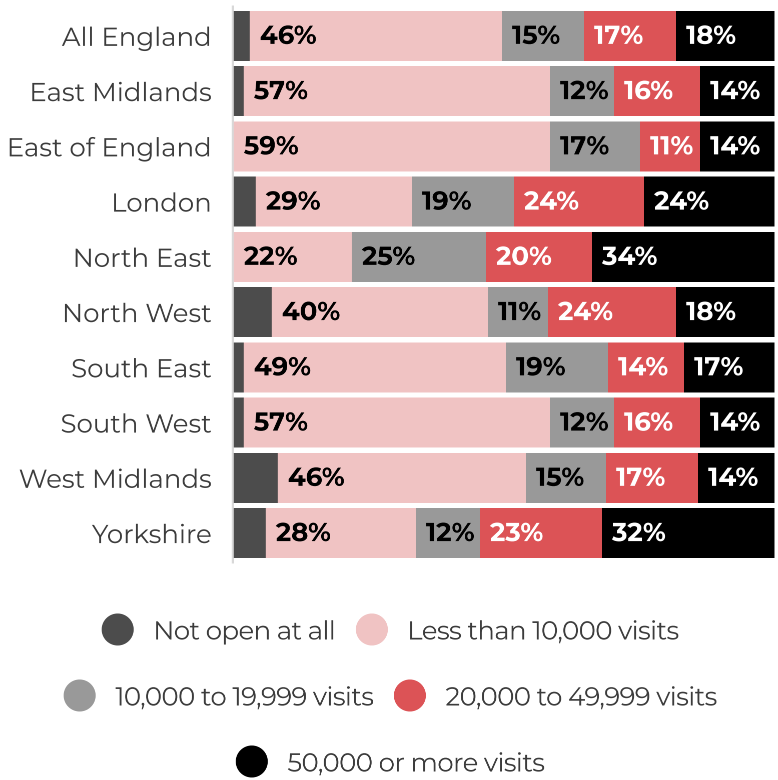
Whilst most museums opened, nearly half saw less than 10k visitors

49% of museums were not open or had less than 10,000 visits in 2022/23

One in four museums which would see between 10,000 and 50,000 visits in a year before the pandemic had less than 10,000 visitors in 2022/23



34% of museums in the North East and 32% in Yorkshire saw 50,000 or more visitors in 2022/23



Combined variable using total opening hours and visit numbers (n = 702, Micro = 251, Small/medium = 274, Large/largest = 145, EM = 64, EE = 95, L = 63, NE = 27, NW = 65, SE = 131, SW = 112, WM = 69, Y = 75)

Visitor numbers are still 18% down on 19/20 levels

"Visitor figures still not where they were pre-covid, however, they continue to increase."

11,150

2022/23 median number of visitors to an accredited museum

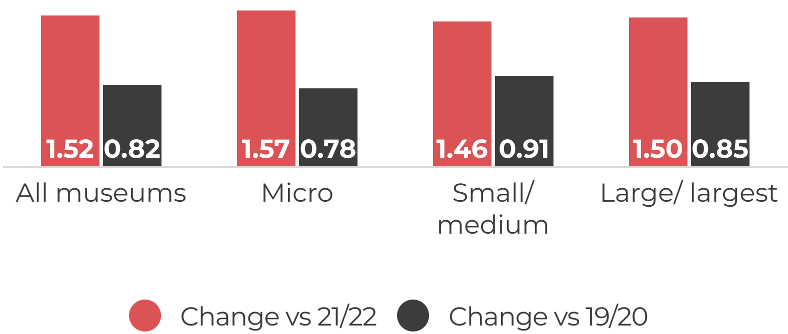
52% higher

than in 2021/22

18% lower

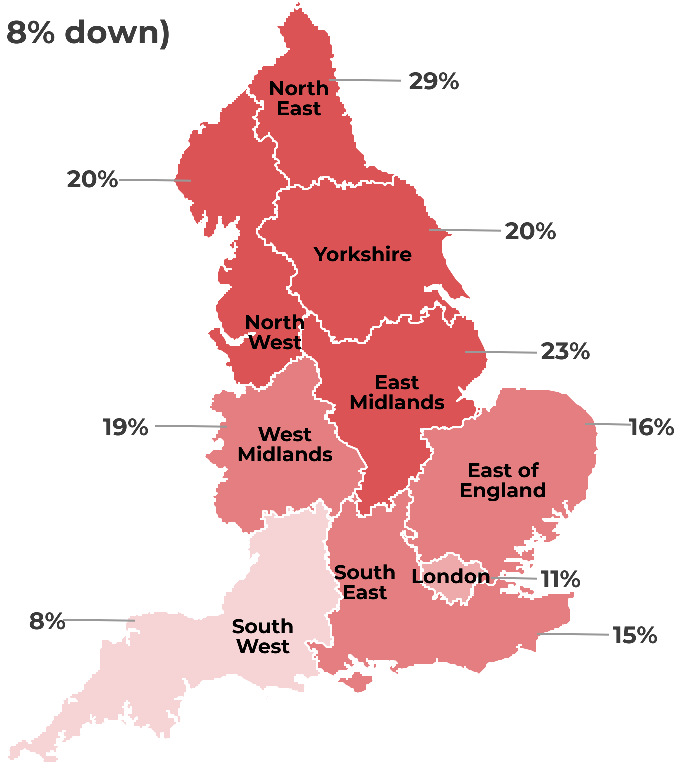
than in 2019/20

Micro museums are further away from pre-pandemic visit levels than other museums



"How many adult visitors did your museum have in 2022/23?"
(n = 634; based on actual audience counts)

Visitor numbers compared to 2019/20 have recovered most in the South West (just 8% down)

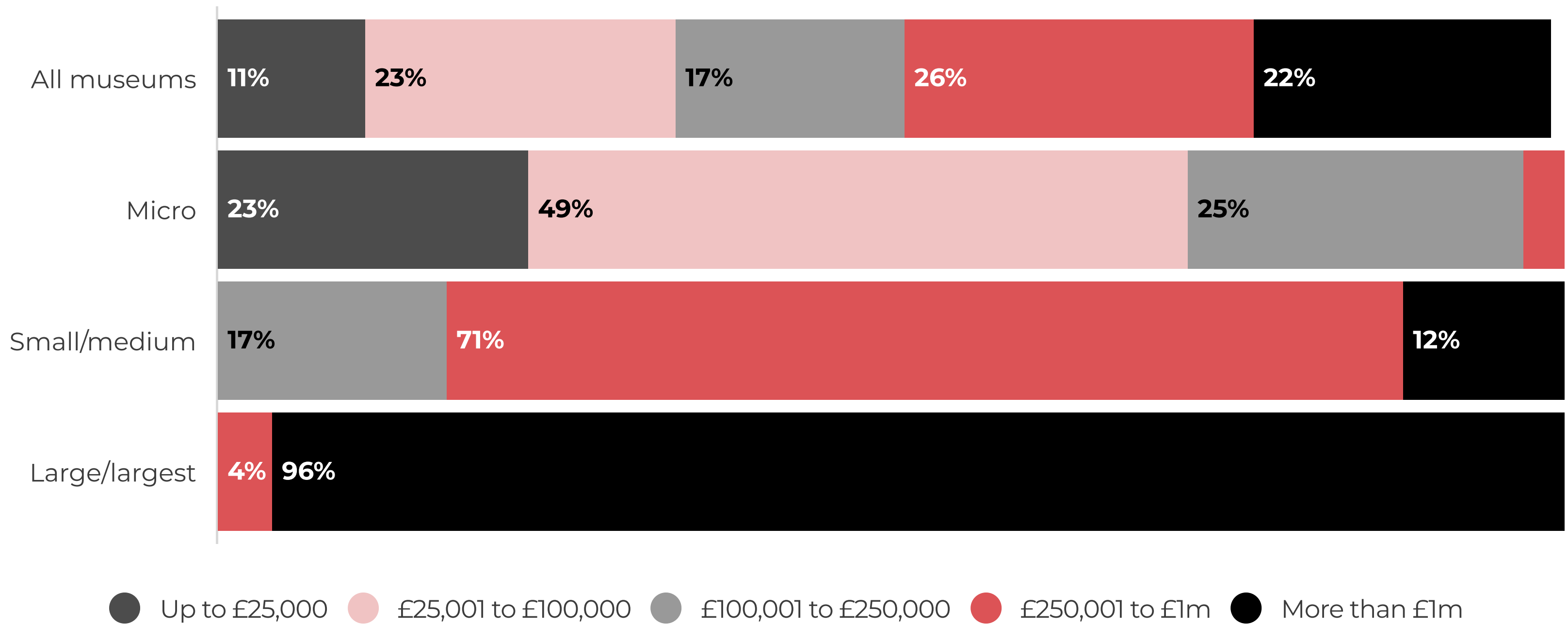


Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

Economic impact of museums has increased with visitor numbers

- The median economic impact of a museum in 2022/23 was £233,033
- This is up on 2021/22 and 5x higher than the £45,526 reported in 2020/21
- However, still around a third down on the £354,681 reported in 2019/20

Close to one in four micro museums contributed up to £25,000 of economic impact in 2022/23, whilst almost all of the largest museums contributed more than £1 million



Economic impact is calculated based on the 2019 AIM Toolkit, factoring in museum visitor numbers and local spend data
n = 634

For some, visitor numbers have not yet recovered to pre-pandemic levels and visitor behaviour is becoming increasingly difficult to predict

Although visitor numbers are increasing, many comment on how they are still seeing an impact from similar issues to last year

Despite many museums being back to pre-pandemic opening hours, visitor numbers are often not back to pre-pandemic and **numbers are still being impacted by similar issues to last year:**

- Some continued reluctance to be in public spaces amongst older, more vulnerable audiences
- Reduced numbers of overseas visitors
- Reduced volunteer numbers impacting opening hours and delivery
- Not all museums have returned to pre-pandemic opening hours

"Visitor behaviour very erratic and hard to predict. Summer numbers low - no overseas tourism to speak of and less UK tourism as more people able to travel abroad. Older and CEV visitors still reluctant to attend because of perceived covid risk."

Visitor demographics and behaviours are changing, making planning more difficult

Comments suggest many museums are seeing a **change from their 'usual' audience and changes in visitor behaviour, such as:**

- More/less families
- Fewer older visitors
- More/less UK holidaymakers
- More/less overseas visitors
- Length of visits increasing
- Particular events are more/less popular than expected
- Last minute booking becoming the norm, etc.

Cost of living crisis

- Increase in popularity of free events/exhibitions
- Lower interest and/or higher expectations for paid for admissions or events
- Some museums are designated as warm spaces

Audience engagement in 2022/23

Analysis of education sessions and other on-site, off-site and online activities

Take me to...

Survey headlines | Background | About the museums | Opening | Audience engagement | Digital | Staff | Volunteers | Finances | Area snapshots

Audience engagement in 2022/23: What to look out for

Almost all museums provided on-site sessions for education providers in 2022/23

Museums with staff are more likely to have provided off-site sessions

The number of education providers engaged in 2022/23 is getting closer to the levels of 2019/20 - 11% down compared to 47% down in 2021/22

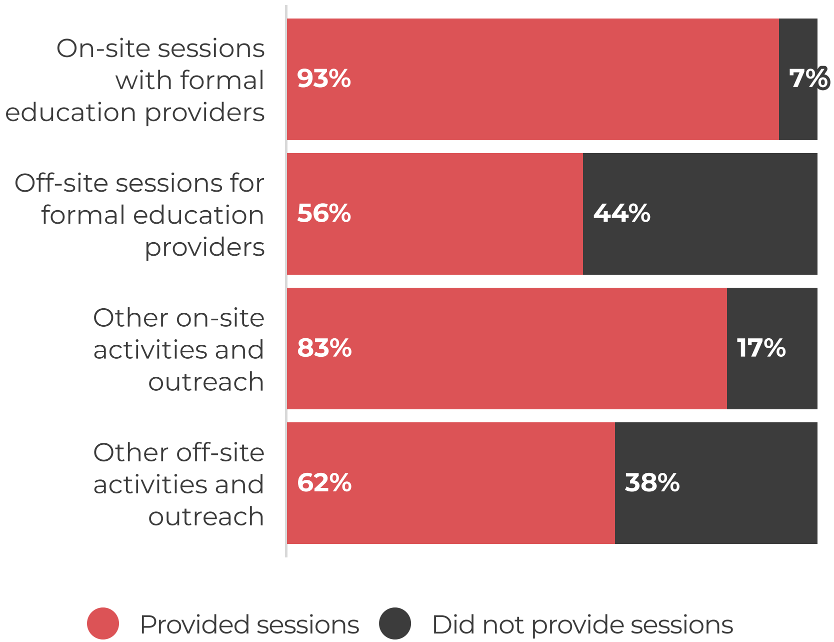
The number of participants engaged in different sessions varies significantly by the size of the museum

Use of digital to deliver education and outreach sessions is at a very similar level to 2021/22

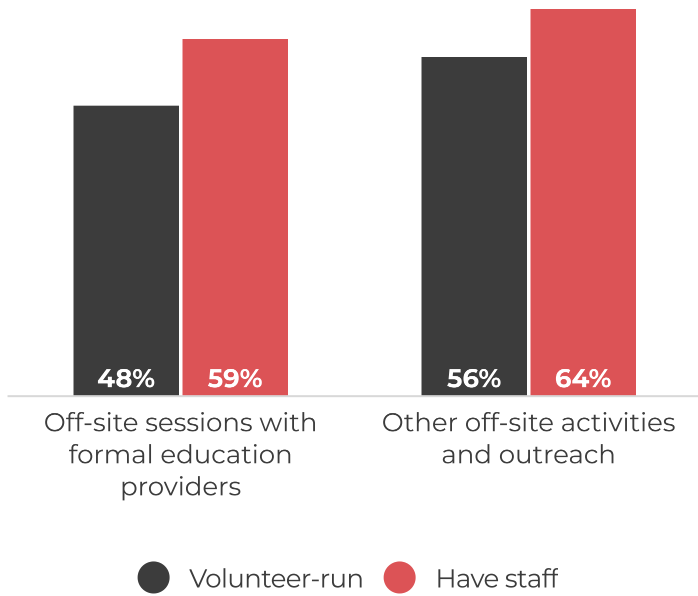
There continues to be a recovery in terms of museums providing educational sessions in 2022/23

"Our educational visits have also increased as international students return to London and education in general gets more 'back to normal'"

Almost all museums managed to provide on-site sessions with formal education providers in 2022/23



Museums with staff were more likely to have provided off-site sessions in 2022/23

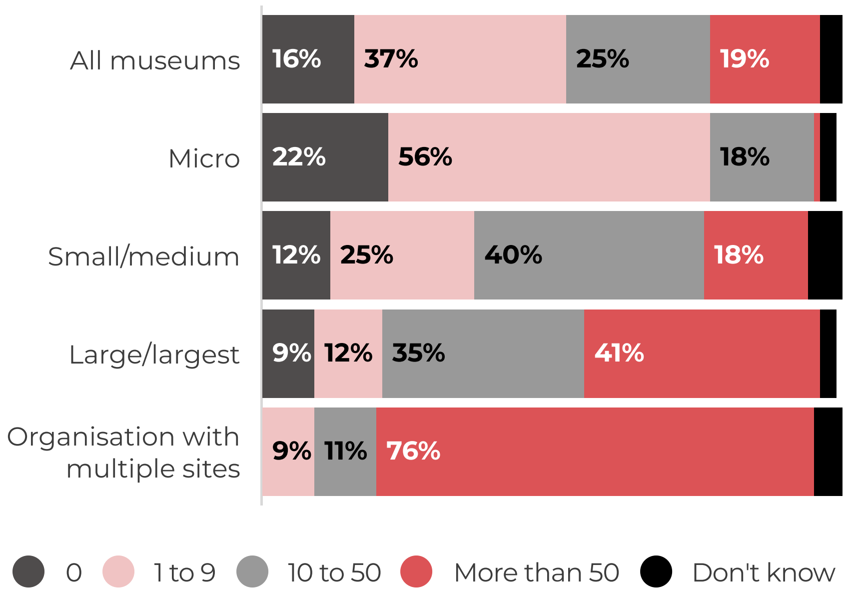


"In 2022/23, did you provide any of the following sessions?" (n = 556);
Note - 'on site' sessions are held at museums and 'off site' sessions at other locations such as schools

Number of education providers engaged is getting closer to pre-pandemic levels

The median number of education providers engaged in 2022/23 is 11% lower than the level in 2019/20; the number was 47% down on pre-pandemic levels during 2021/22

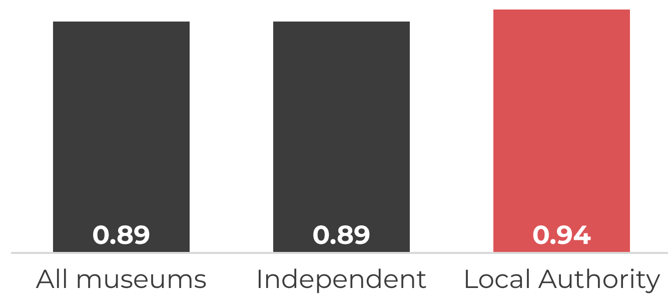
More than half of museums either did not provide sessions or engaged less than 10 educational providers



14 **Median number of formal education providers engaged in 2022/23 (of those museums that did engage providers)**

Local authority museums appear to be closer to pre-pandemic levels in terms of educational providers engaged

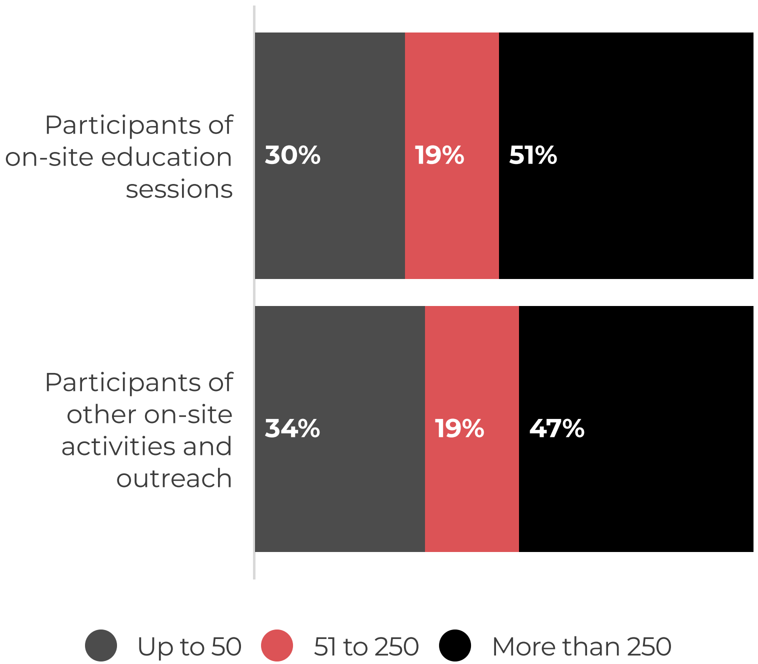
They are at **94%** of the level they were at in 2019/20, compared to independent museums that are at **89%** of the pre-pandemic level



"For 2022/23, please provide the total number of formal education providers engaged in on-site, off-site and digital sessions." (n = 263)

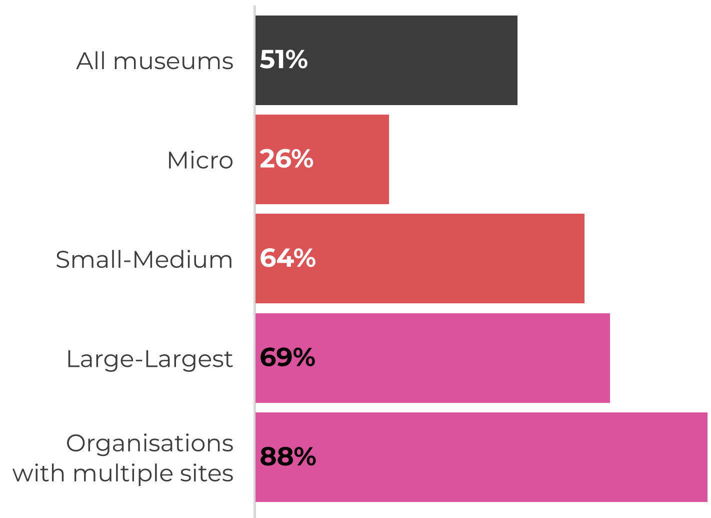
Participation in on-site education sessions and the size of museum

Of those museums that provided on-site education sessions and activities in 2022/23, half did so for more than 250 participants



"For 2022/23, please provide the number of participants for... on-site education sessions and other on-site activities and outreach" (n = 434)

The larger the museum, the more likely they were to report engaging more than 250 education participants on-site

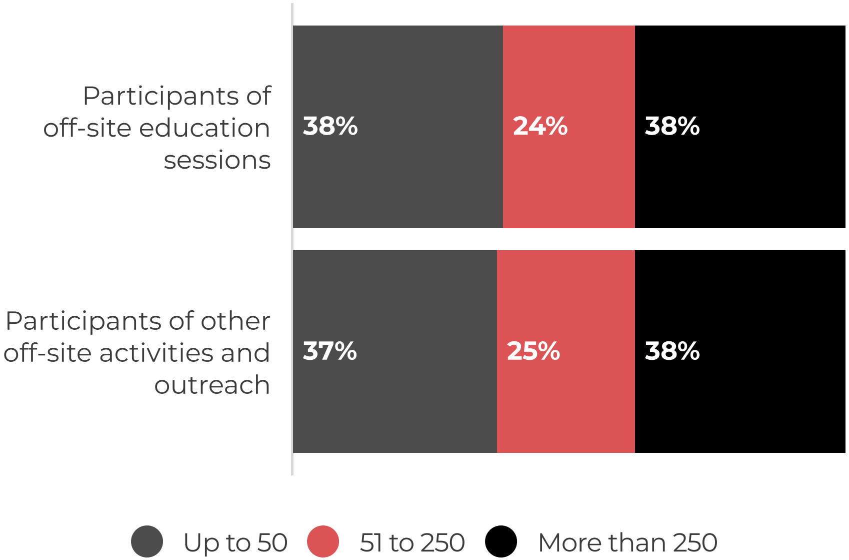


410

Median number of participants in on-site education sessions during 2022/23

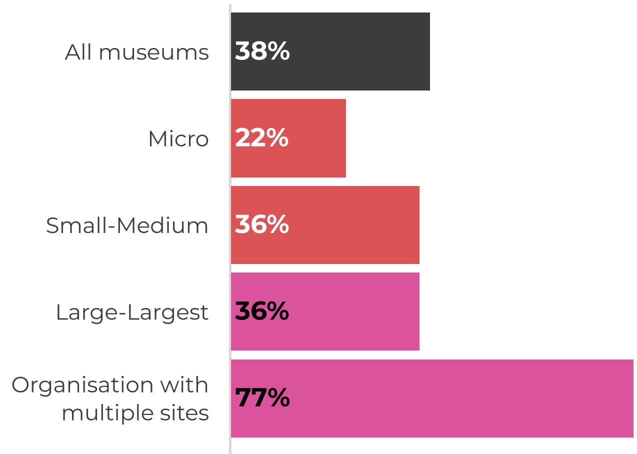
Participation numbers also vary significantly by size of museum for off-site sessions and activities

Close to 2 in 5 museums that provided off-site education sessions in 2022/23 did so for more than 250 participants



"Due to external funding we have been able to deliver schools workshops to more children than ever had before."

The larger the museum the more likely they were to report engaging more than 250 education participants off-site



54

Median number of participants in off-site education sessions during 2022/23

?

"For 2022/23, please provide the number of participants for... off-site education sessions and other off-site activities and outreach" (n = 264)

Although education providers visits have recovered well for many, this is now being hit by the cost of living crisis

For many, on-site school visits have recovered well

- Education providers keen to return 'to normal'
- Some increased their focus post-pandemic on increasing and improving engagement with education providers

However, this is not the case for all, with some museums commenting that the number of school visits and overseas student groups have been lower than expected

And comments suggest the increasing cost of transport is becoming a significant barrier for some education providers

> *School visits are not recovering as we might have expected. Schools have cancelled visits due to cost and our faculty is hosting fewer outreach visits not only due to higher costs but also due to difficulties with arrangements, not least because colleges have not returned to offering lunches for outreach visits.*

> *A lot of effort has gone into activities, learning and outreach services to encourage return after the pandemic.*

> *School visits have declined this year with the main cause reported to be the high cost of taking classes out of school and the reluctance of schools to ask parents to help subsidise the visits.*

> *The effects of the pandemic are still being felt with the slow recovery in overseas visitors, particularly European school parties.*

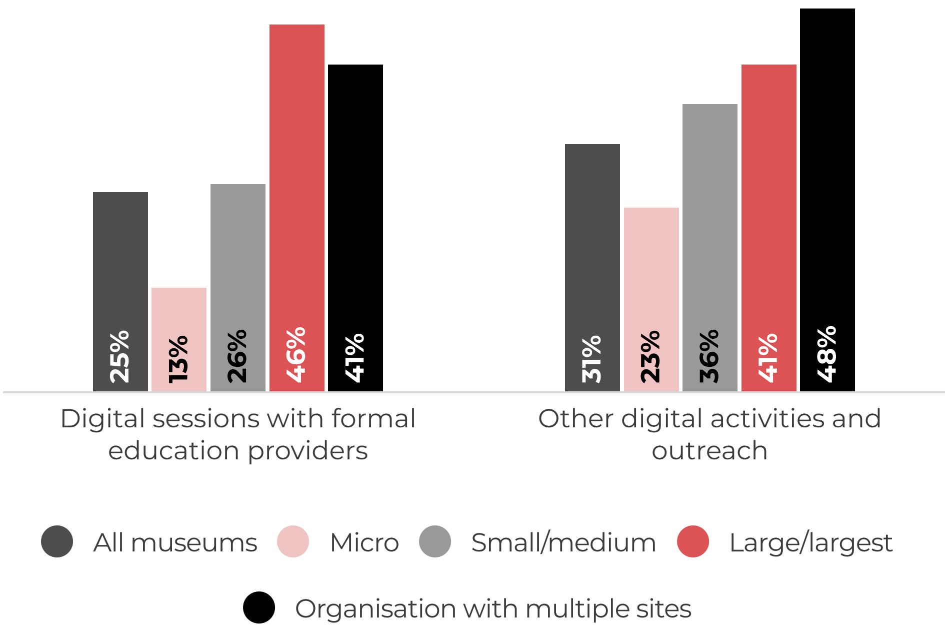
Cost of living crisis

- Schools are struggling to fund increased transport costs
- Families struggling to pay for school visits, even nominal amounts
- Increased expenses to deliver off-site activities

25% of museums provided digital sessions for education providers and 31% for other digital activities and outreach, lower than the previous year

The use of digital sessions peaked in 2020/21, with in-person sessions increasingly the most common delivery method in 2021/22 and 2022/23

Larger museums were more likely to report providing digital sessions in 2022/23



Museums that are wholly volunteer-run were less likely to provide digital sessions during 2022/23

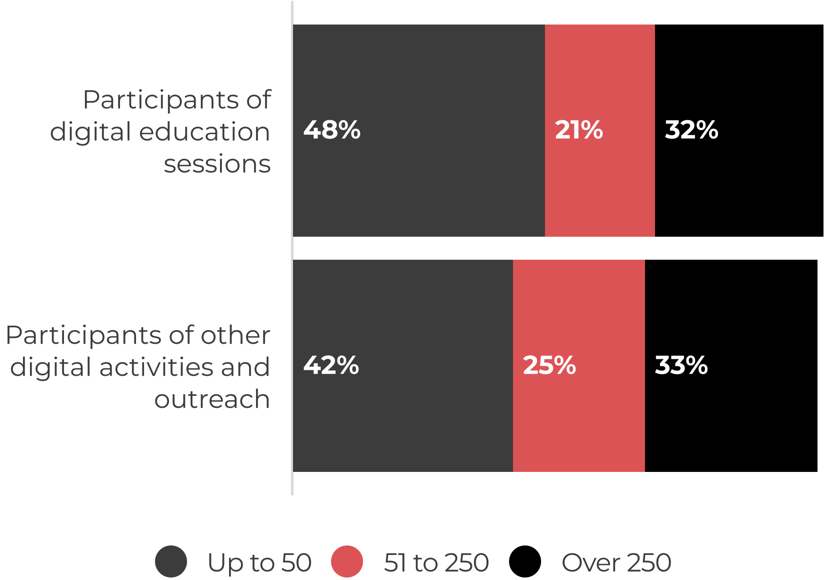
90% of wholly volunteer-run museums did not provide digital educational sessions, compared to **71%** of museums with staff

"In 2022/23, did you provide the following sessions? Digital sessions for formal education providers and Other digital activities and outreach" (n = 468, Micro = 216, Small/medium = 130, Large/largest = 62, Organisations with multiple sites = 61)

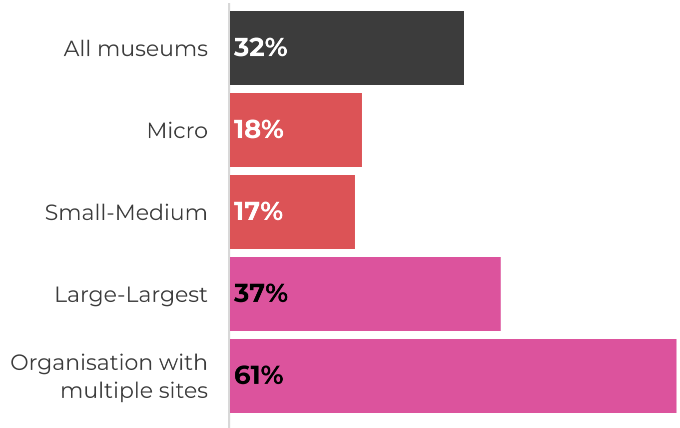
Digital sessions in 2022/23 reached a similar number of people that they did in the previous year

It has not returned to the levels of 2020/21 when 41% of digital sessions with education providers reached more than 250 participants

Of those museums offering digital education sessions during 2022/23, around a third reached over 250 people



The larger the museum the more likely they were to report engaging more than 250 digital education participants



? For 2022/23, please provide the number of participants engaging in... Digital education sessions (n = 116) and Other digital activities and outreach (n = 174)

Use of digital in 2022/23

Analysis of data relating to digital engagement

Take me to...

Survey headlines | Background | About the museums | Opening | Audience engagement | Digital | Staff | Volunteers | Finances | Area snapshots

Use of digital in 2022/23: What to look out for?

Website visit numbers continue to increase on levels reported in previous years

The number of social media followers continues to rise too, it is now up 48% on the level in 2019/20

The majority of museums use Facebook, whilst museums with paid staff are more likely than volunteer-run museums to use Instagram and video sharing platforms

Seven in ten museums are using video conferencing tools internally and externally, although this has dropped on levels reported in 2021/22

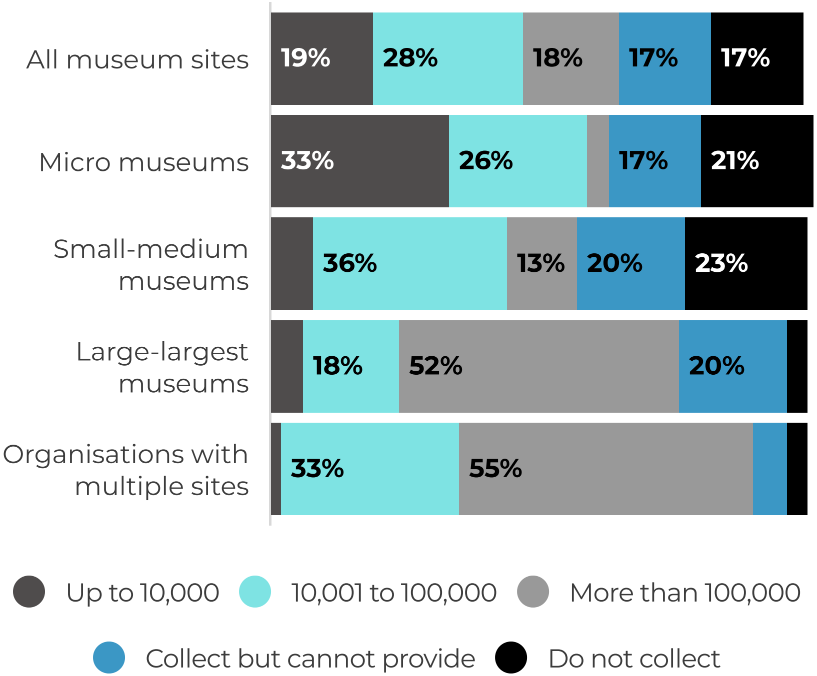
The larger the museum, the more likely they are to use online ticketing

Website visitor numbers continue to rise

Website visits reported in 2022/23 are 8% higher than 2021/22 and 50% higher than 2019/20.

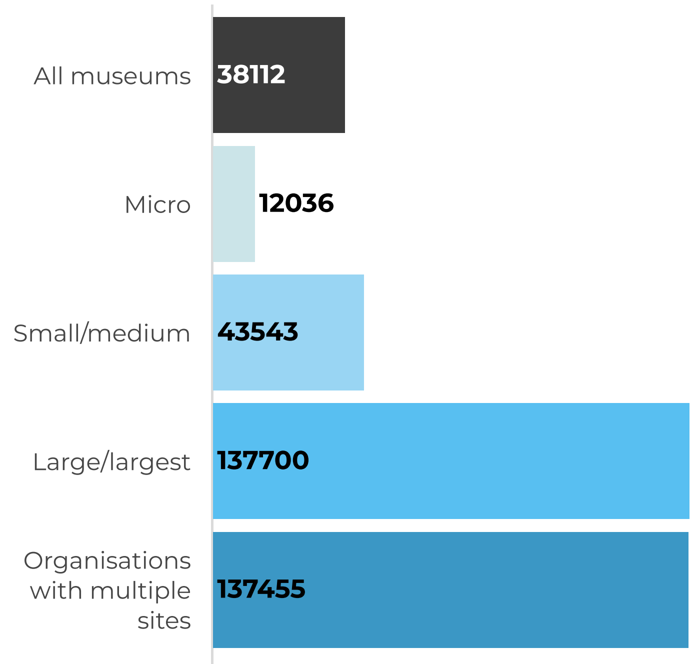
More than half of large-largest museums had more than 100,000 website visits in 2022/23

More than 1 in 5 micro and small/medium museums do not collect data on their website visitors



38,112 **Median number of website visits - all museums**

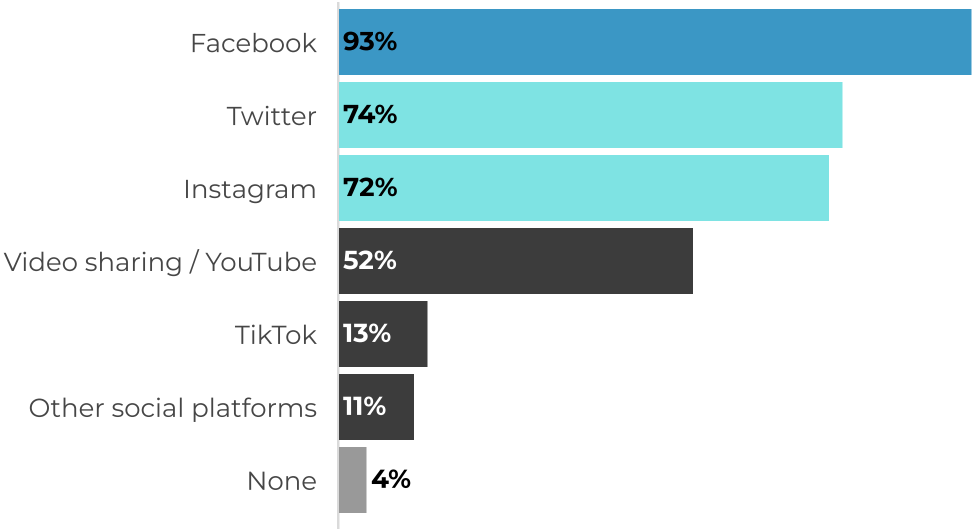
The bigger the museum the bigger the median number of website visits reported



"What was the total number of unique visitors to your website between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023?"
(n = 551)

Facebook is used by the majority of museums

Twitter and Instagram are also used by more than 7 in 10 museums



"The changes to the visitor demographics (as a result of COVID) has caused us to alter our approach to exhibitions, experiences, and advertising. Consequently, we have done more online with social media and have plans to expand this further to increase digital accessibility and to reach wider audiences."

Museums with staff are more likely to use Instagram and video sharing platforms

87% of these use Instagram compared to 36% of museums with volunteers

67% use video sharing platforms compared to 20% of museums with volunteers

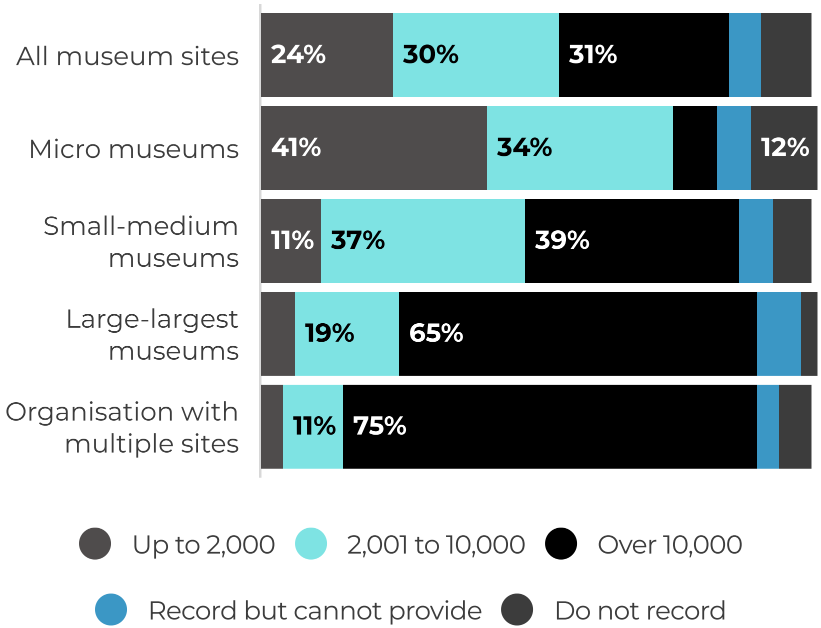
Does your museum use any of the following social media platforms? (n = 556)

The number of social media followers for museums is up 9% on the previous year

And social media followers are up by 48% compared to the levels in 2019/20.

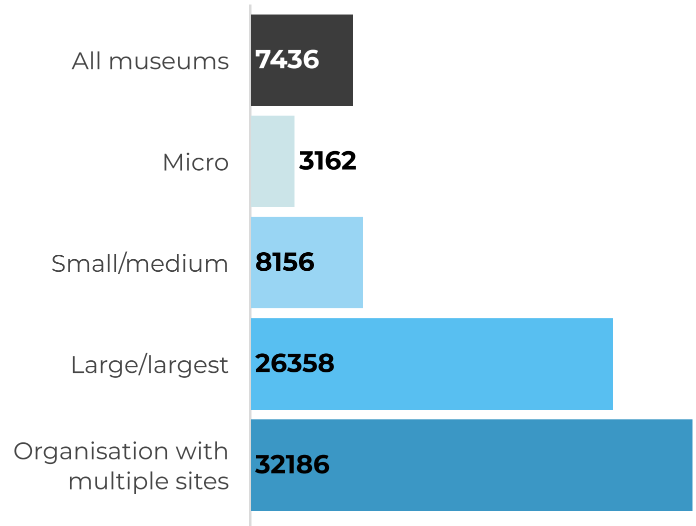
2 in 3 large-largest museums have more than 10,000 social media followers in 2022/23

2 in 5 micro museums have up to 2,000 social media followers



7,436 **Median number of social media followers - all museums**

The bigger the museum the bigger the median number of social media followers reported

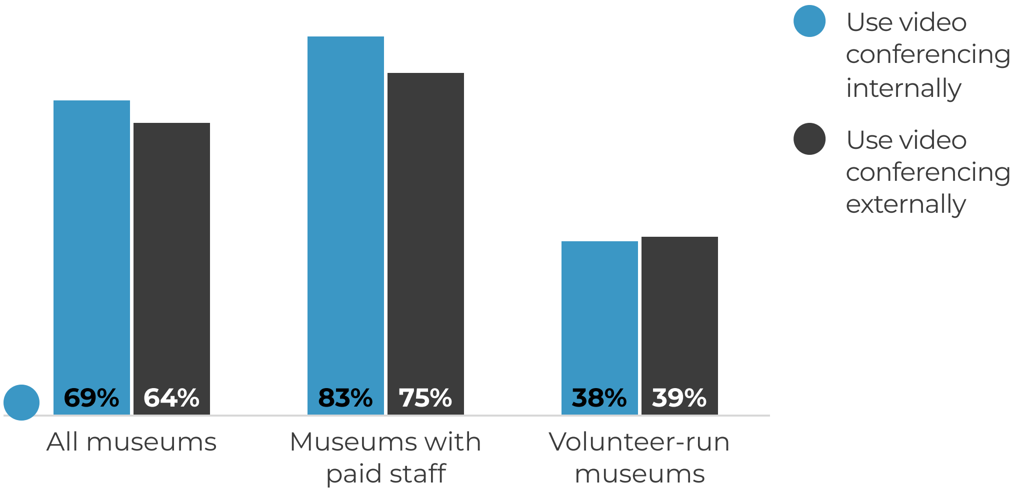


How many followers/subscribers did your museum have to its social media accounts at the end of 2022/23?
(n = 535)

7 in 10 museums use video conferencing and communication internally

Use of video conferencing both internally and externally appears to be down on the previous year (2021/22).

Volunteer-run museums are less likely to use video conferencing tools than museums with staff



Local authority (87%) and University (88%) museums appear more likely to use video conferencing internally

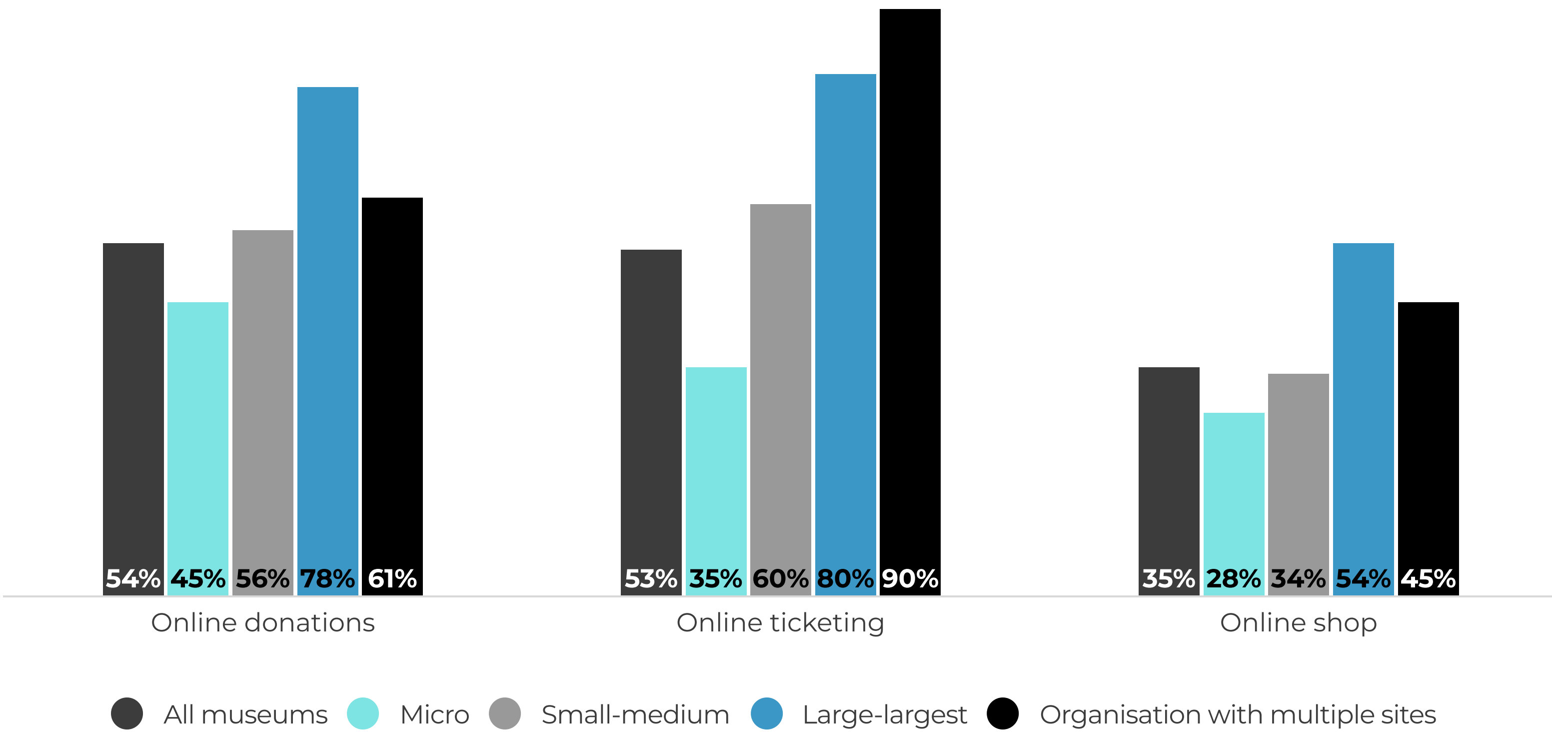
"Office based staff have continued to work from home, but the majority now share their time between home and office working."

"Has your museum used, any of the following digital platforms or tools during 2022/23?"
(n = 556)

What other digital tools were museums using during 2022/23?

Tools for increasing income

The larger the museum the more likely they are to use online ticketing

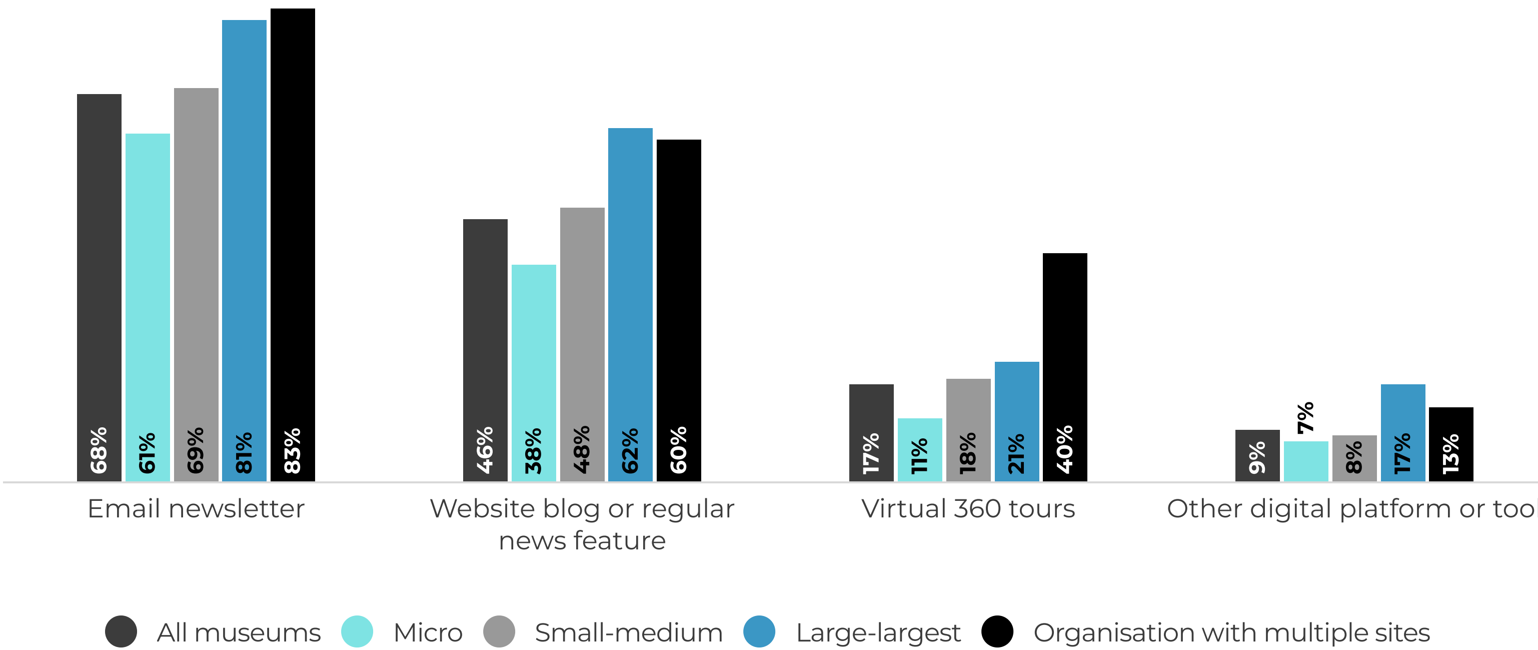


"Has your museum used, any of the following digital platforms or tools during 2022/23?"
(n = 556)

What other digital tools were museums using during 2022/23?

Tools for wider audience engagement

Email newsletters are relatively common amongst all museum sizes, but micro museums are less likely to have a website blog or virtual 360 tours



"Has your museum used, any of the following digital platforms or tools during 2022/23?"
(n = 556)

Museum staff in 2022/23

Analysis of data relating to the workforce

Take me to...

Survey headlines | Background | About the museums | Opening | Audience engagement | Digital | Staff | Volunteers | Finances | Area snapshots

Museum staff in 2022/23: What to look out for

3 in 10 museums are volunteer-run

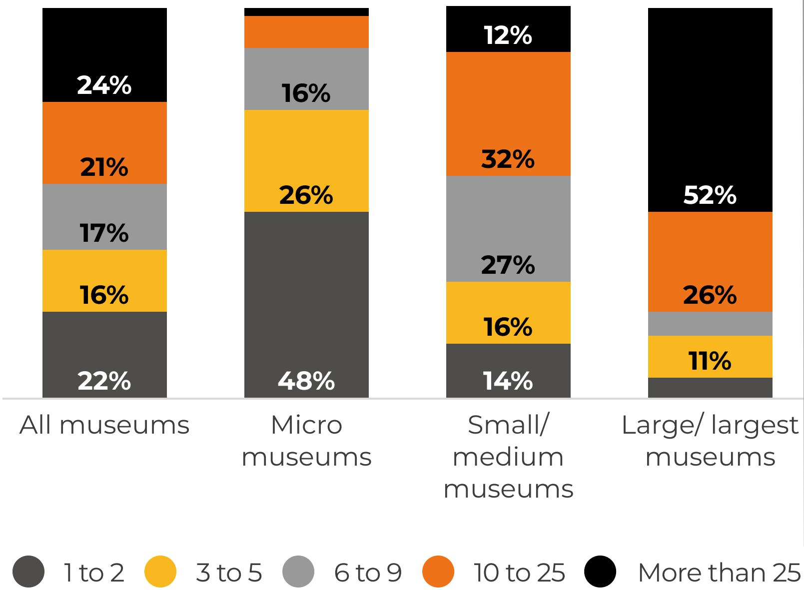
There has been no significant change in staffing levels across museums over the last three years

Museums were much more likely to have hired new staff or contract work than to have made redundancies or ended contracts early

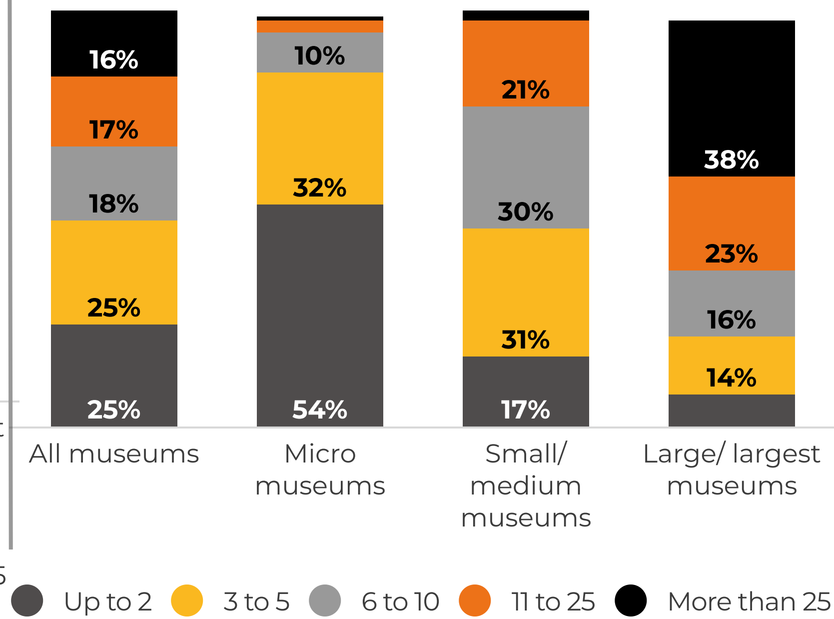
Seven in ten (69%) museums have paid staff

This is lower for independent museums (62%) **and micro museums** (48%)

Half of micro museums with paid staff have 1 to 2 employees.
Half of the largest museums have more than 25 employees



The full-time equivalent (FTE) headcount is lower, with 54% of micro museums with paid staff having up to 2 FTE employees



"In 2022/23, what was the total headcount of paid staff employed by your museum?"
(n = 377)

Overall, there has been no change in staffing levels across museums over the last three years

The median value of change in total headcount of employees compared to both 2021/22 and 2019/20 is 0%

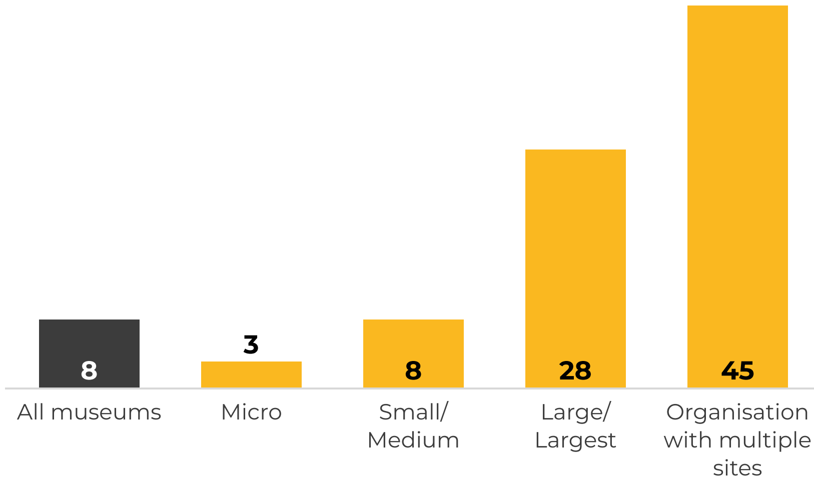
8 **Median headcount of paid staff in 2022/23**

The headcount of paid staff is lower for independent museums (6) compared to local authority museums (15)

5 **Median FTE headcount of paid staff in 2022/23**

The FTE equivalent of paid staff is lower for independent museums (4.0) compared to local authority museums (8.8)

Median headcount of paid staff in 2022/23 ranges from 2 in micro museums to 22 in large-largest museums and 49 for organisations with multiple museum sites

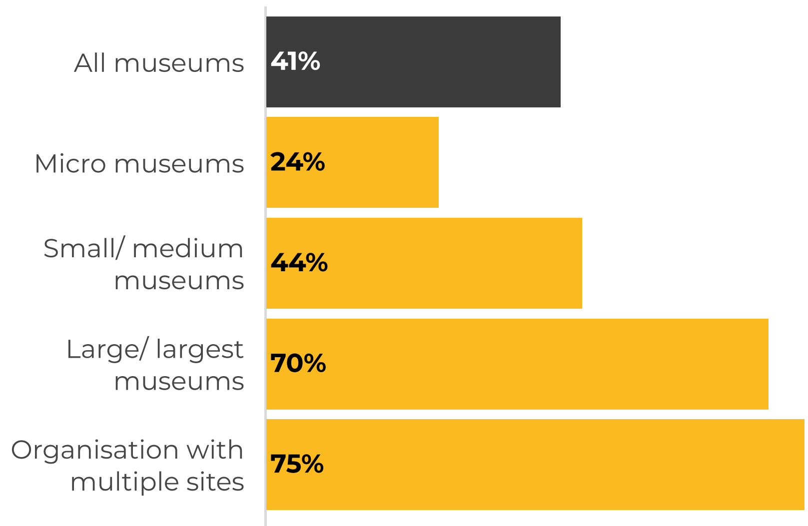


?
"In 2022/23, what was the total headcount of paid staff employed by your museum?"
(n = 379)

2 in 5 museums hired employees or contract work in 2022/23

- **This was 55% for museums which already had paid staff; 7% of volunteer-run museums hired for contract work**
- **30% of museums with staff recruited for existing posts and 24% for new posts**
- **Just 5% of museums with staff made redundancies or ended contracts early in 202/23**

The larger the museum the more likely they were to hire staff or contract work



Roles recruited were varied

These included:

- Volunteer coordination
- Project management and admin
- Marketing, including digital
- Curation and collections
- Community engagement, outreach and learning

"We took the brave step - given our audience figures - of increasing staff hours [...] and employing a new volunteer coordinator."

"In 2022/23, did your museum organisation do any of the following?"
(n = 556)

Stress and workload is not as strong a theme, but still an issue for some and this is compounded by staff recruitment and retention challenges

Whilst workload/stress levels is not as prominent a theme as last year, this is still an issue for some

Particularly in museums that are not fully staffed and/or where volunteer support has not fully returned

Staff retention and recruitment remains a challenge

- Museums are reporting that recruitment for many roles has been difficult, but filling **retail, hospitality and front of house roles** has been particularly challenging
- Some have seen staff leaving for similar roles closer to home due to increased travel costs and/or seasonal and zero hours staff leaving to find more hours/permanent contracts

Cost of living crisis

- Increased stress due to difficult personal circumstances
- Trying to support staff but can often only afford minimal salary increases, which also impacts on ability to recruit

"Our workforce are stretched to their limits because, despite increased income being generated, increased costs mean we cannot afford to increase the staffing."

"It continues to be difficult to recruit and retain casual staff and staff in retail and café positions, this reflects national trends in employment."

"There is a significant shortage of people to fill front line roles (visitor experience, shop/cafe) at all levels and we have seen a fair amount of turnover in entry-level staff. There is pressure on salaries due to the cost of living. NPOs and DCMS funded museums offer salaries with which the independent sector simply can't compete".

Museum volunteers in 2022/23

Analysis of data relating to volunteers

Take me to...

Survey headlines | Background | About the museums | Opening | Audience engagement | Digital | Staff | Volunteers | Finances | Area snapshots

Museum volunteers in 2022/23: what to look out for

There are four volunteers for every one employee in museums, with this as high as 40 volunteers per one employee in one museum

Those with the highest volunteer ratios are the smallest museums and those based in the least deprived areas

The number of volunteers in museums is now just 5% down on the levels in 2019/20

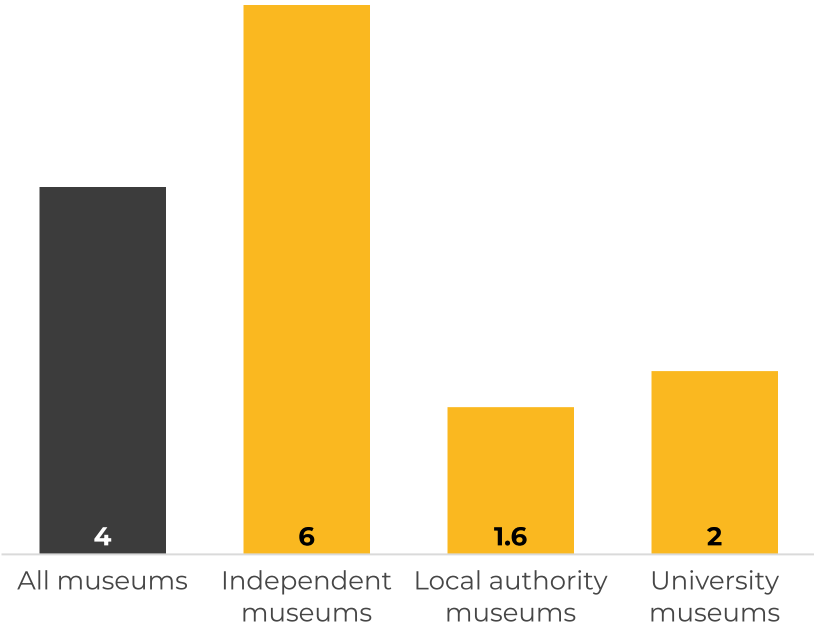
But the number of hours contributed by volunteers is still down 14% on the levels in 2019/20

Museums are more likely to feel volunteer hours committed and new volunteers recruited have both increased over the last 12 months

There are four volunteers for every one employee in museums

This ratio ranges from 0.4 volunteers to 40 volunteers per employee across different museums

There is a ratio of 6 volunteers for every 1 employee in independent museums, significantly higher than the ratio for local authority and university museums



The highest volunteer-to-employee ratios are in museums that are…

- **Micro**
  12 volunteers for every **1** employee, compared to **3** for large/largest museums

- **Located in least deprived areas**
  5.7 volunteers for every **1** employee, compared to **3.3** for museums in the most deprived areas of the country

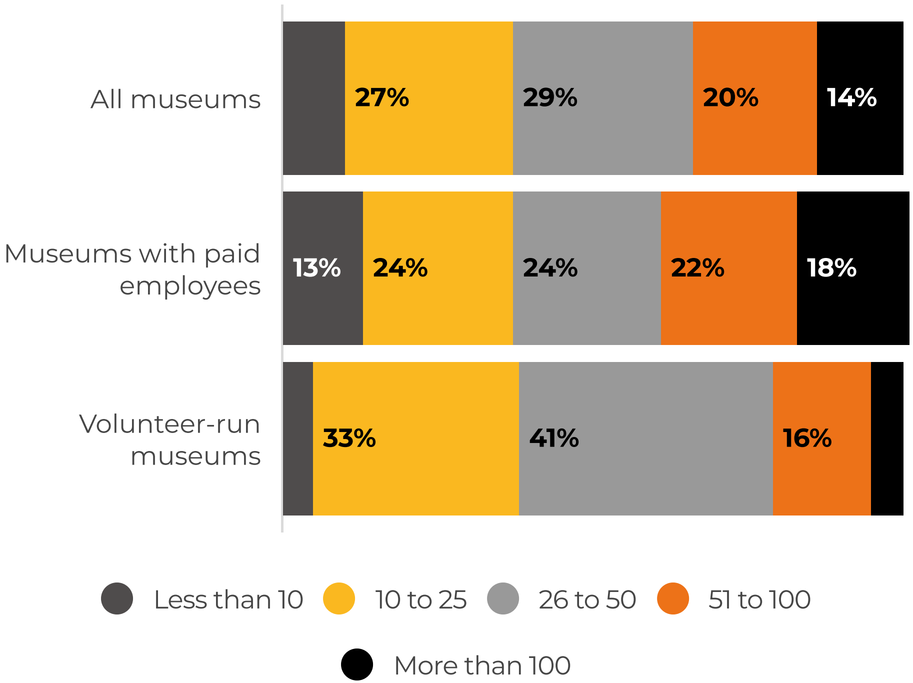
36 **Median headcount of volunteers in 2022/23**

? Volunteer to staff headcount ratio - number of volunteers divided by number of paid employees (n = 362)

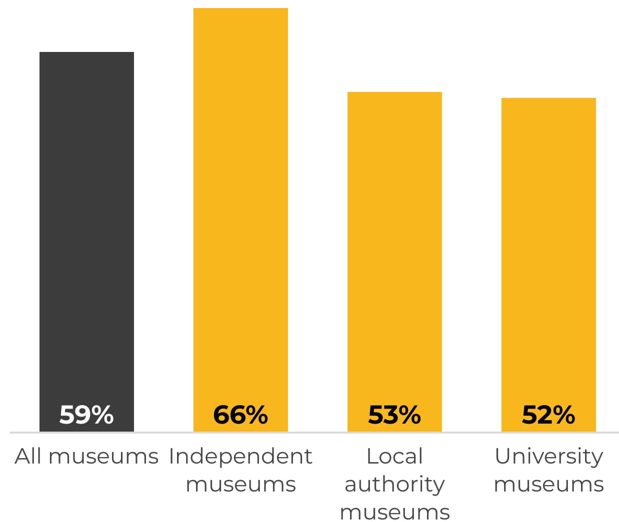
A third of museums have more than 50 volunteers

- 20% of museums have between 51 and 100 volunteers, with 14% having 100+ volunteers.
- Conversely, 10% report less than 10 volunteers, 27% have between 10 and 25 volunteers and a further 29% have between 26 and 50 volunteers.

Three quarters of volunteer-run museums rely on between 10 and 50 volunteers



Two thirds of independent museums have more than 25 volunteers, higher than museums in local authorities and universities

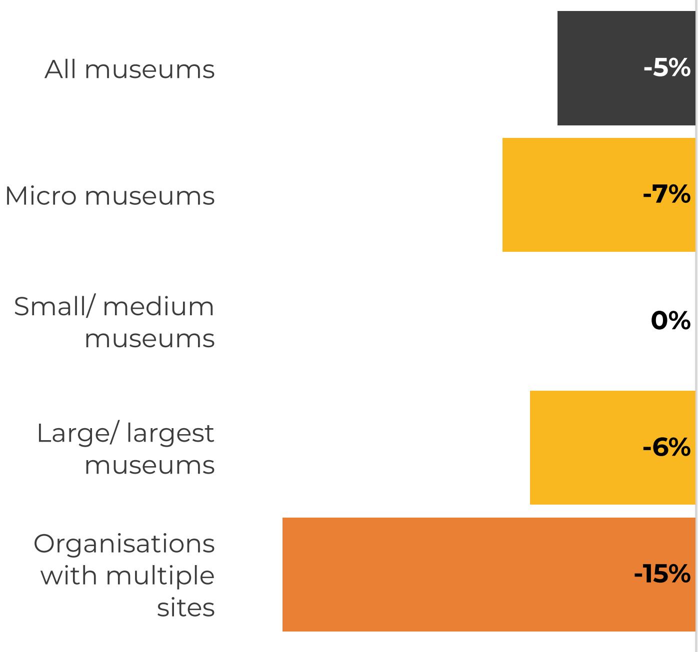


"In 2022/23, what was the total number of volunteers at your museum?"
(n = 531)

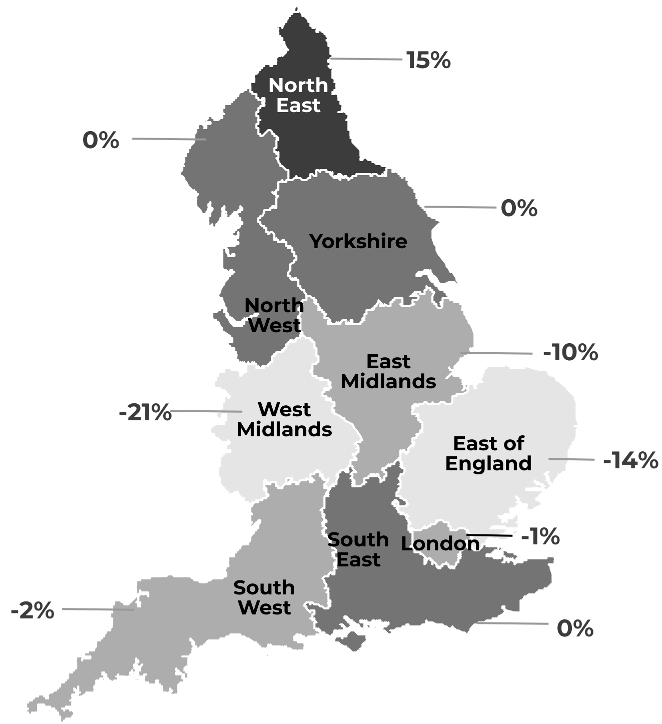
The number of volunteers in museums is 5% down on levels in 2019/20

The number of volunteers in museums has increased by 6% on levels in 2021/22 though

Organisations with multiple museum sites reported being down 15% on 2019/20 levels, significantly higher than single site museums of all sizes



The reduction in museum volunteers compared to 2019/20 is most significant in West Midlands



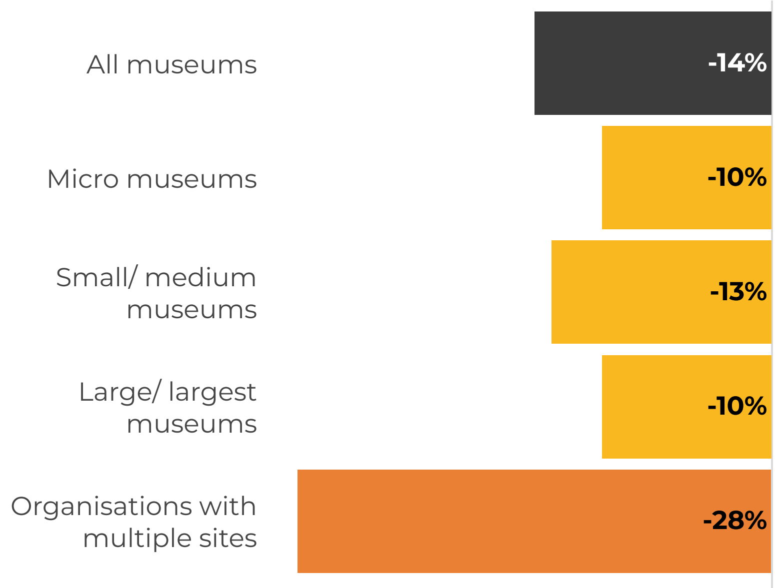
Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

% change in the volunteer headcount between 2019/20 and 2022/23: constant sample (n = 284)

The number of hours volunteers have contributed to museums is still down 14% on the levels in 2019/20

This level is down 3% in volunteer-run museums compared to 19% for museums with paid staff.

Organisations with multiple sites report volunteer hours being down 28% on 2019/20 levels, significantly higher than single site museums



2,700 **Median volunteer hours contributed at a museum in 2022/23**

6% of museums have changed their approach to recording volunteer hours in the last year as a result of increased remote working

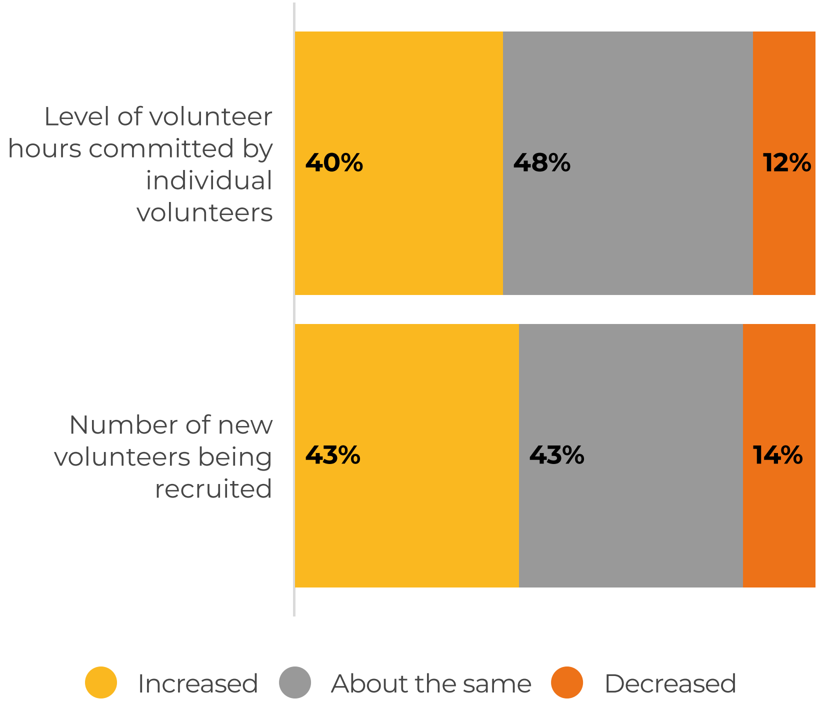
This was lower for micro museums (3%) compared to 11% of organisations with multiple sites

"We have less volunteers than pre-pandemic and although we have had enquiries we are finding less people are able to give bigger periods of their time. In 22-23 we are going to reshape our volunteer program in order to try and encourage more people to work with us in different ways that are suitable to them."

% change in volunteer hours contributed between 2019/20 and 2022/23: constant sample (n = 222)

The proportion of museums feeling levels of volunteer hours and new volunteers recruited have increased is up on the previous year

2 in 5 museums reported an increase in the level of hours committed by individual volunteers in 2022/23



Which museums have seen the biggest increase in hours committed by individual volunteers?

Organisations with multiple sites

58% of these organisations reported an increase in volunteer hours committed, compared to **38%** of micro museums and **33%** of small/medium museums

Which museums have seen the biggest increase in new volunteers being recruited?

Museums in less deprived areas

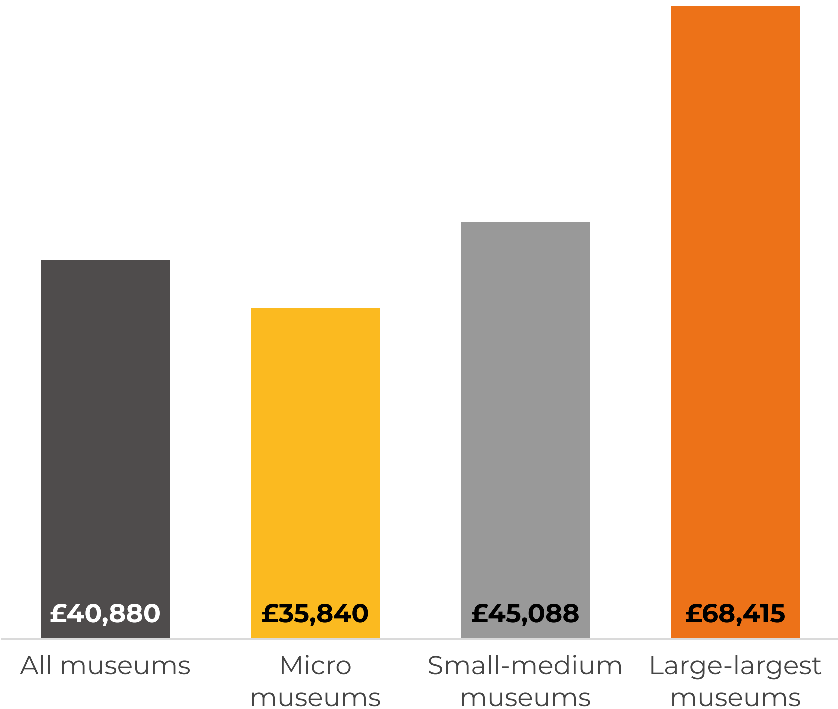
51% of museums in the least deprived areas reported an increase in new volunteers recruited, compared to **36%** in the most deprived areas

"How has the level of volunteer hours committed by individual volunteers changed during 2022/23 compared to the previous year? / How has the number of new volunteers being recruited changed during 2022/23?" (n = 543)

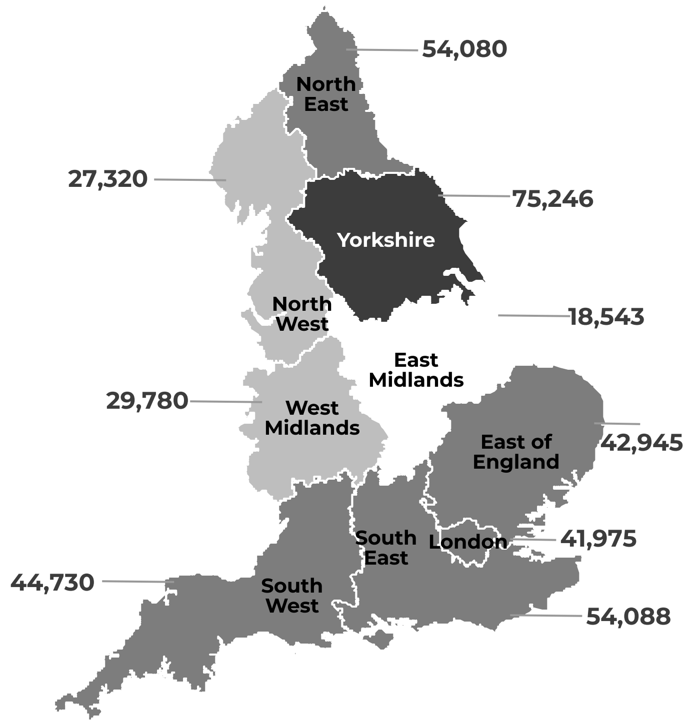
Volunteers are adding £40,880 of value to each museum

This is based on hours contributed and local median pay. Median volunteer value was £39,568 in 2019/20, £11,322 in 2020/21 and £25,567 in 2021/22.

Volunteers at the largest museums are adding close to double the value that they are at micro museums



Median volunteer value appears lower in the Midlands and North West



Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

Calculated volunteer value: number of volunteer hours contributed multiplied by median hourly pay of local authority area from ONS data (n = 384)

Whilst some museums report volunteer numbers are stable/have increased, others have not seen volunteers return and are struggling to recruit

A mixed picture for volunteers

Many report that volunteer numbers have increased or have remained **fairly stable** and they have been able to replace (often elderly) volunteers who have left/did not return with new volunteers.

However, some museums are still experiencing **fewer volunteers** are **struggling to recruit** new replacements

Change in volunteers availability

Comments suggest some museums have seen a change in volunteer hours or commitments with new and returning volunteers looking for **more flexibility and/or offering less time.**

Cost of living crisis

- Volunteers returning to work
- Increased travel expenses/ unwilling to travel as far

"Some volunteers did not return after the pandemic, but we have had a good year for recruiting new ones."

"We are struggling to recruit new volunteers. Existing volunteers are fantastic but some are struggling to give time. People seem to be committed to paid employment, child care and other commitments with less time to volunteer."

"Volunteers are travelling from less far afield, or, if they are based further away, they have reduced their visits from say once a week to every other week or some even now just once a month."

Finances in 2022/23

Analysis of financial data

Finances in 2022/23: What to look out for?

3 in 10 museums reported an annual turnover of less than £25k in 2022/23

Museums are more likely to self-report an increase in expenditure than income during 2022/23

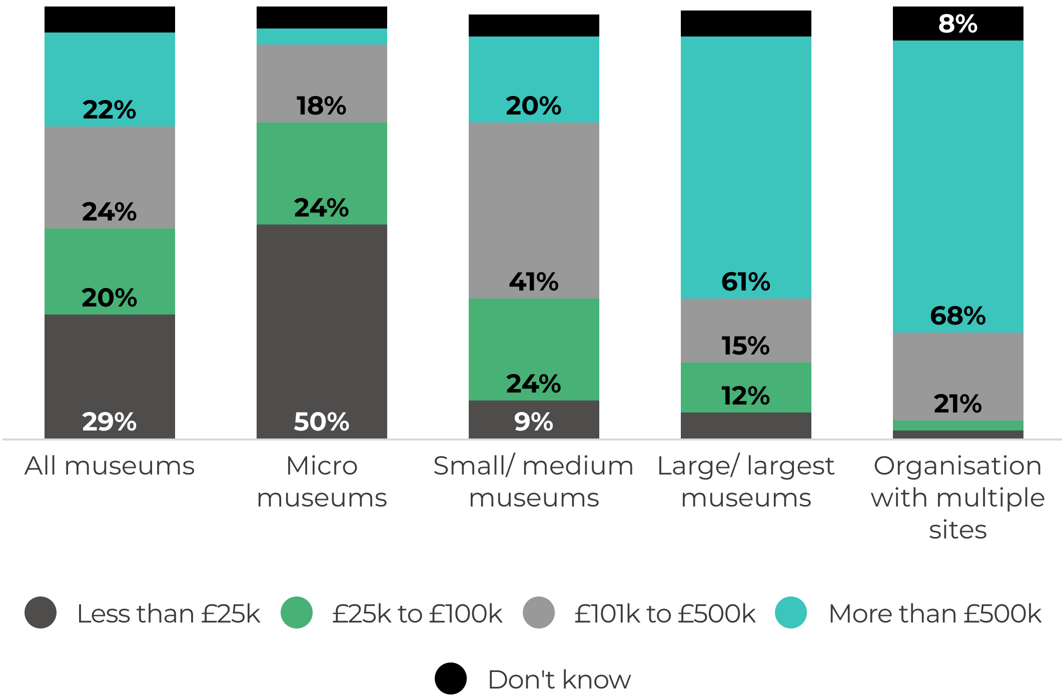
Most museums receive on-site donations and the level of income from this is now close to 2019/20 levels

Income from admissions is also close to pre-pandemic levels, although micro and volunteer-run museums are still some way off

Half of museums reported an annual turnover of up to £100k in 2022/23

22% of museums reported an annual turnover above £500,000

Close to 3 in 10 museums had a turnover of less than £25k in 2022/23



Median annual turnover:

£93,661

This ranges from £35,840 among micro museums to £1,462,562 for large / largest museums

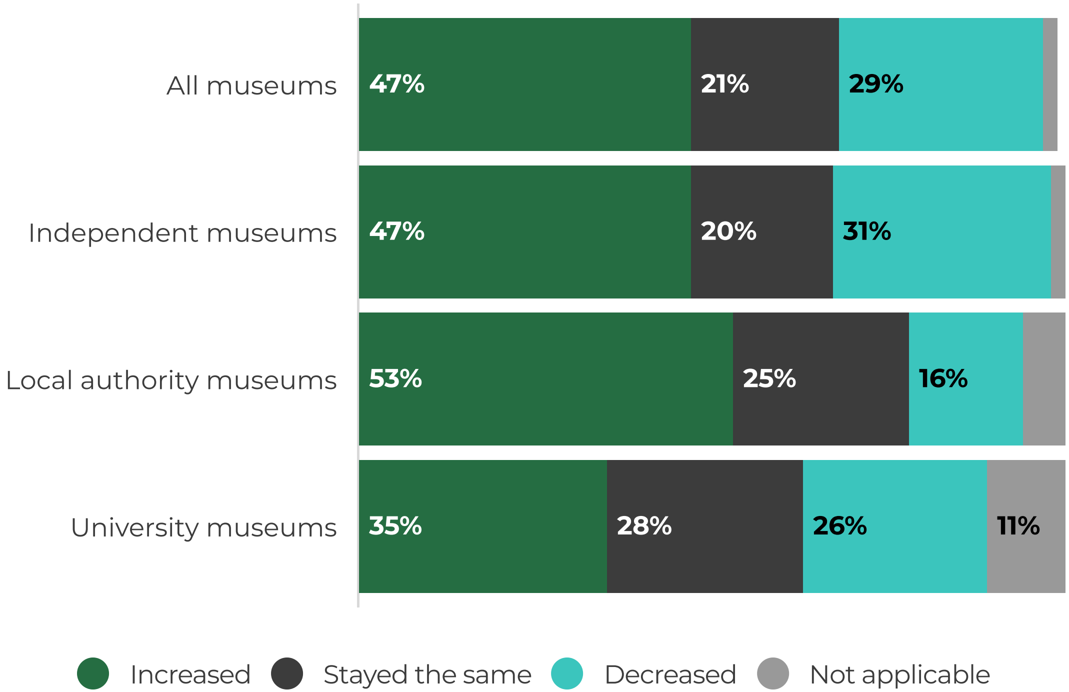
Median turnover of museums in rural areas (£53,500) **is significantly lower than those in urban areas** (£90,951)

"What was your museum's annual turnover/income in 2022/23?"
(n = 556)

Museums were more likely to report an increase in income in 2022/23

21% of museums reported income in 2022/23 staying at the same level.

University museums were more likely to report a decrease in income than other museums



Museums which charge for admissions were more likely to report an increase in income in 2022/23

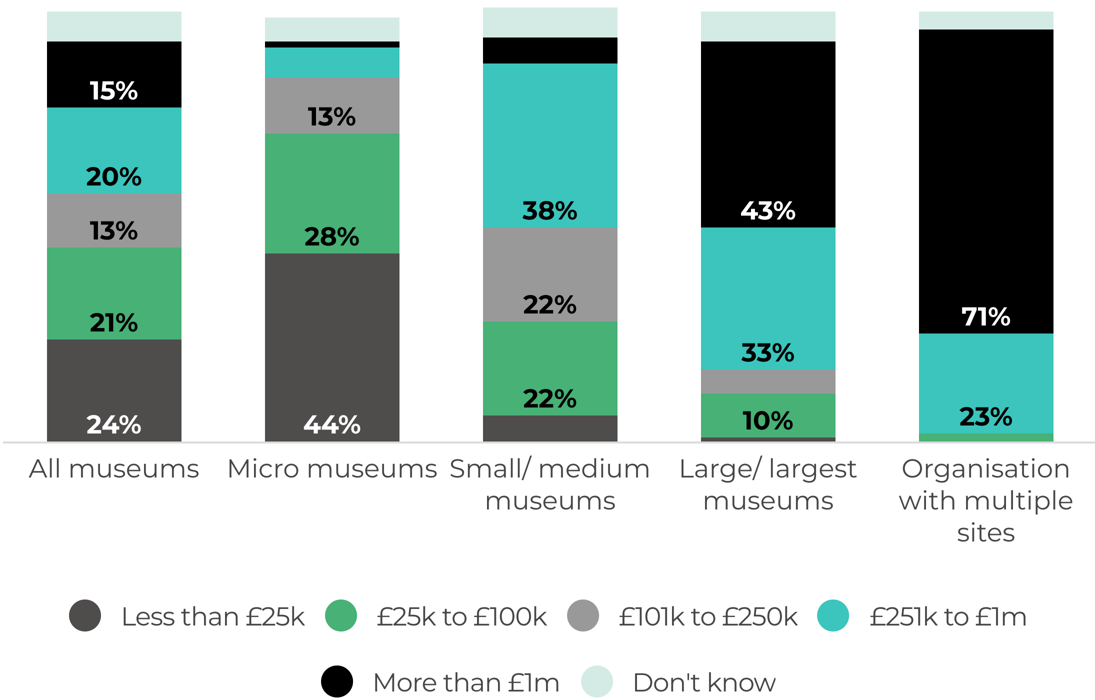
56% of museums that charge for admissions reported an increase, compared to **46%** that do not charge

"In 2022/23, how has your income changed?"
(n = 556)

Median annual expenditure for a museum in 2021/22 is £122,023

This ranges from £24,563 for a micro museum to £1,559,358 for a large/largest museum

44% of micro museums had an annual expenditure of less than £25k in 2022/23



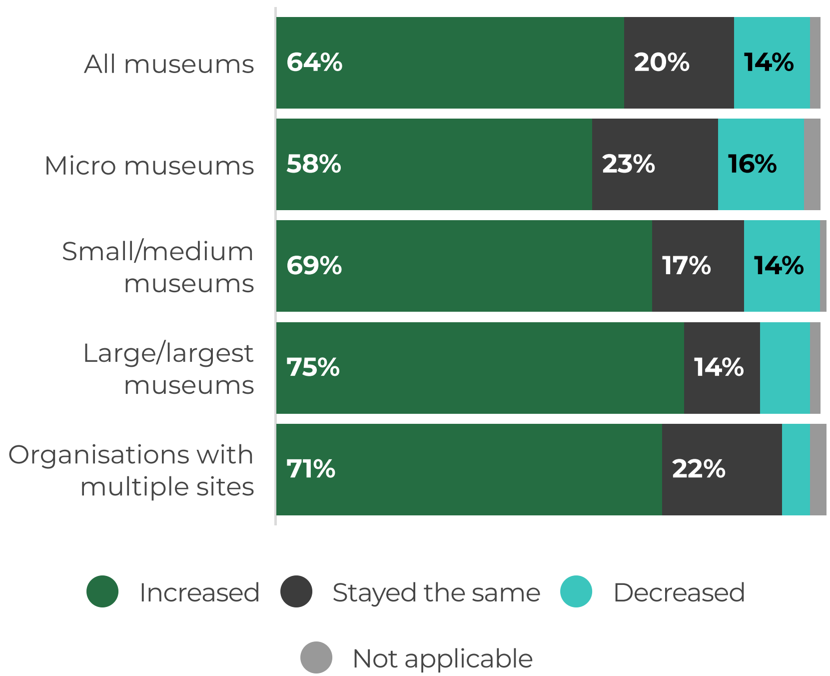
Median expenditure of museums with paid staff (£384,853) **is significantly higher than those which are volunteer-run** (£13,964)

"What was your museum's annual expenditure in 2022/23?"
(n = 553)

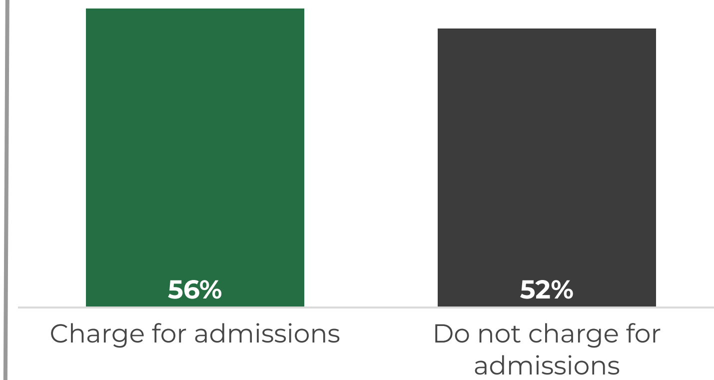
Nearly two thirds of museums reported increased expenditure in 2022/23

64% indicated that expenditure had increased, whilst 14% had experienced a decrease

This increase has been felt across all sizes of museums, including organisations with multiple sites



Museums that charge for admissions were more likely to report an increase in expenditure



46% of museums with paid staff indicate that at least half of their expenditure is on staff costs

63% of organisations with multiple sites indicate that at least half of their expenditure is on staff costs

"In 2022/23, how has your expenditure changed?"
(n = 556)

Are some museums facing a 'perfect storm' with increasing costs and lower budgets/funding whilst having to increase income from visitors who are facing their own cost of living difficulties?

Operating costs have increased across the board

- Energy costs
- Insurance
- Materials and supplies
- Contractor fees
- Staff salaries (including increase in minimum wage)
- Volunteer expenses

Many museums seem to be 'just about coping' and the future is uncertain

- Some museums are on fixed energy deals and are concerned about the impact of significant rises in cost in the near future
- Difficult to improve engagement and offer value for money/low entry fees with lower or uncertain budgets/funding
- Increased costs impacting on ability to maintain collections, maintain or improve buildings, invest in new projects/programmes, etc.

"Operating and maintenance costs have increased dramatically, e.g. the electricity bill has increased from around £1k per month to £3.5 - 4k per month. All extra income we generate from increased footfall and better quality public offer and improved engagement goes to cover the increases in expenditure. Effectively we are working very hard in order to stand still."

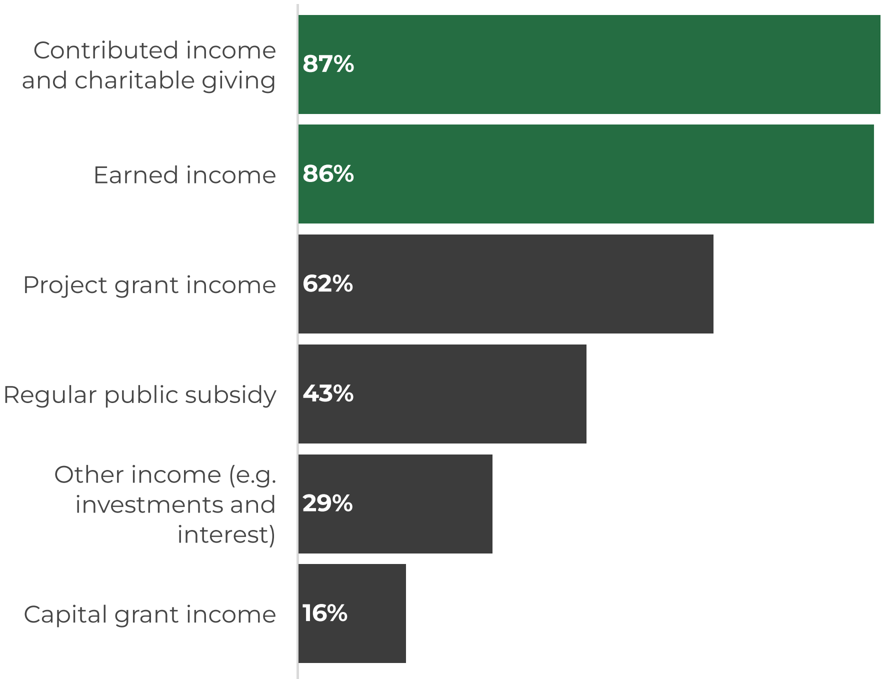
"Finances will get tougher over next few years. Very little meat on the bone. 63% of costs are staff costs and 25% are building costs. No room to move. Required to increase footfall but no tools to do that with vacant posts to manage budgets".

"We survived covid, but we have no funds for essential capital expenditures. We have three roofs which are leaking. Some of the leaks are falling on our priceless artefacts, which have to be covered in tarpaulins. This detracts from our exhibits and the visitor experience."

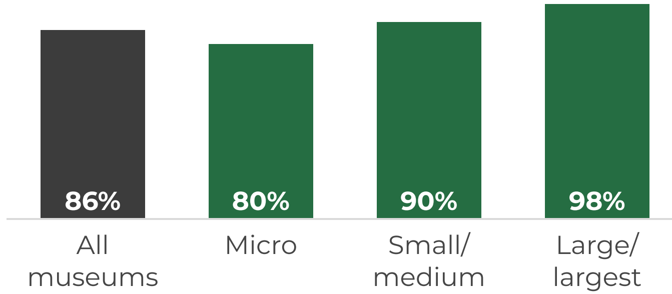
Museums were most likely to receive income from charitable/contributed income and earned income

Earned income includes admissions charges, retail and cafe/refreshments.

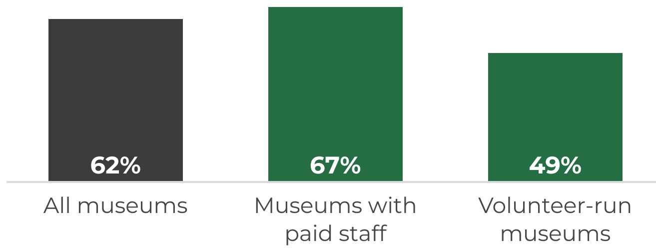
Other types of income received in 2022/23 include project grant income and regular public subsidy



Large/largest museums are most likely to receive earned income



Volunteer-run museums are less likely to receive project grant income

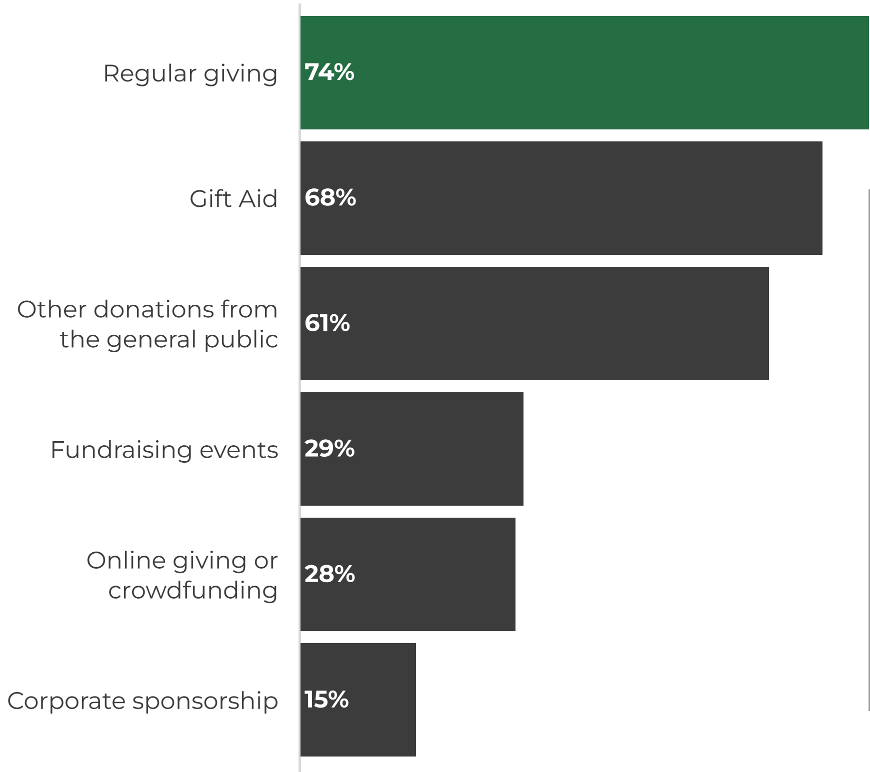


"In 2022/23, did you receive income from...?"
(n = 542)

On-site donations in 2022/23 were down just 4% on 2019/20 levels

96% of museums collected donations on-site in 2022/23 and donations received on-site were 45% higher than in 2021/22

3 in 4 museums receiving other contributed income did so through regular giving



One-off donations on-site in 2022/23 appear to vary significantly by museum

£3.3k Median on-site donations

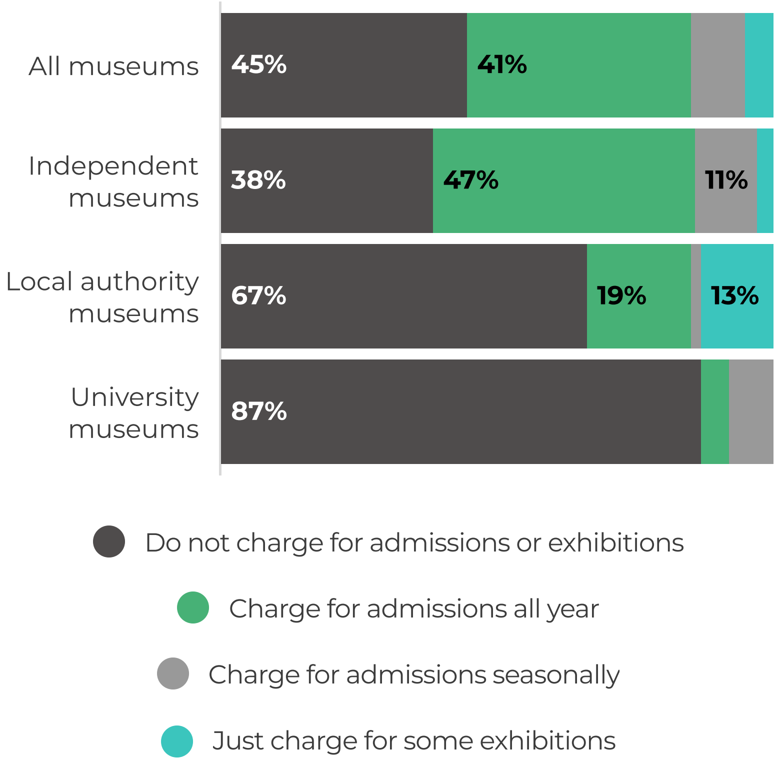
£339 Lowest reported on-site donations

£108k Highest reported on-site donations

"In 2022/23, did your museum receive contributed or charitable income from...?"
(n = 247)

There is a fairly even split of museums that do and don't charge for admissions

Independent museums are more likely to charge for admissions all year round

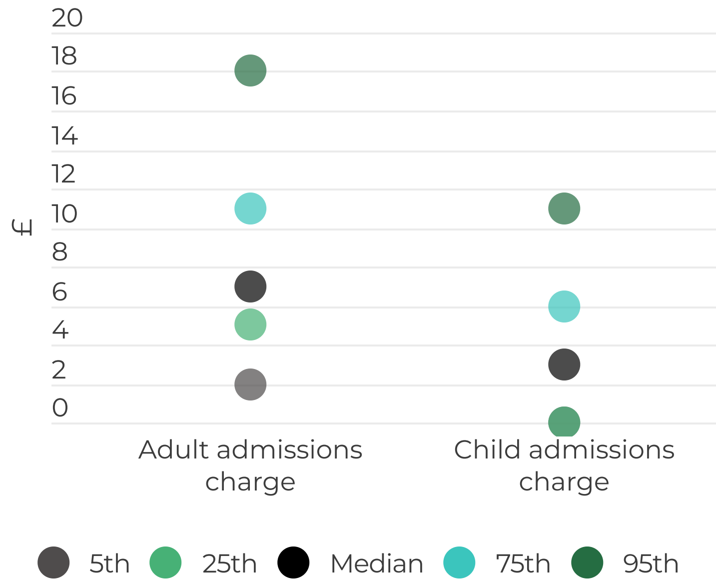


Adult **£7**

Median admissions charge

Child **£3**

An adult admissions charge ranges from £2 to £18, although it is more likely to be between £5 and £11

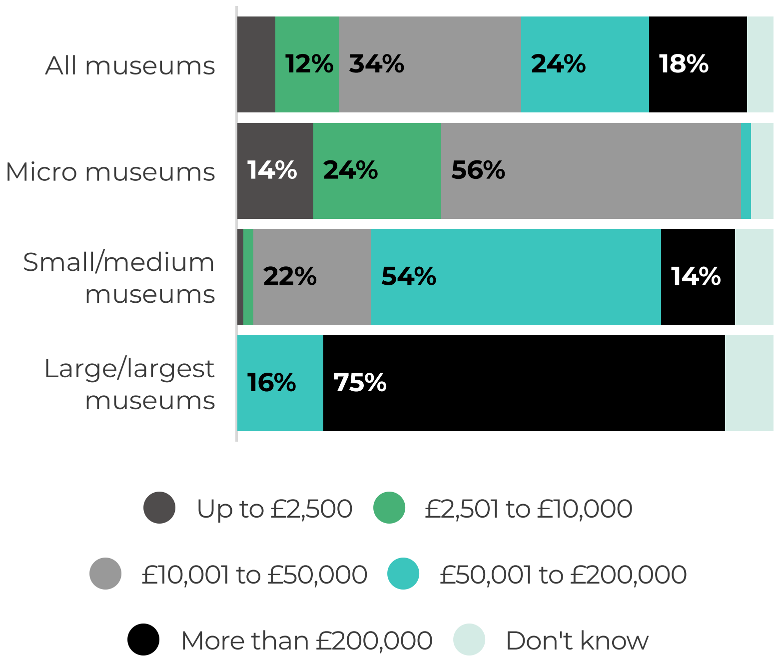


"Which of the following best describes your museum's admissions charges?"
(n = 468)

Income from admissions is only 3% lower than it was in 2019/20

Median admissions income in 2022/23 for a museum was £41,263: this ranged from £12,960 for micro museums to £661,229 for large/largest museums

3 in 4 of the large-largest museums reported admissions income above £200k



Which museums are furthest away from the levels of admissions income they were seeing in 2019/20?

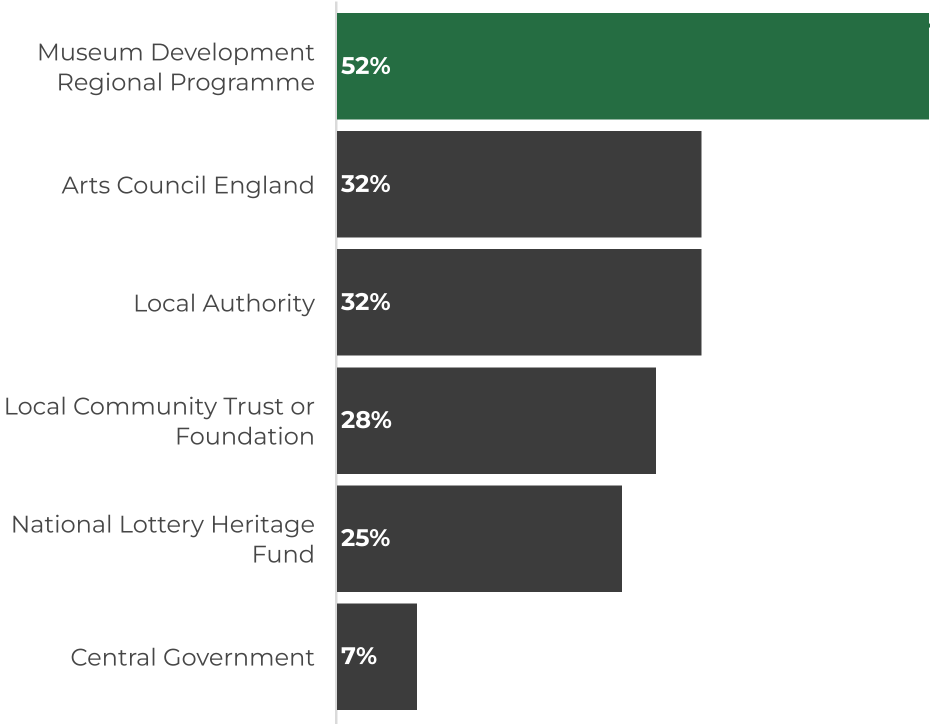
Micro museums
15% below the level they were at in 2019/20, whereas small/medium museums are 13% up

Volunteer-run museums
23% below the level they were at in 2019/20, whereas museums with paid staff are just 2% down

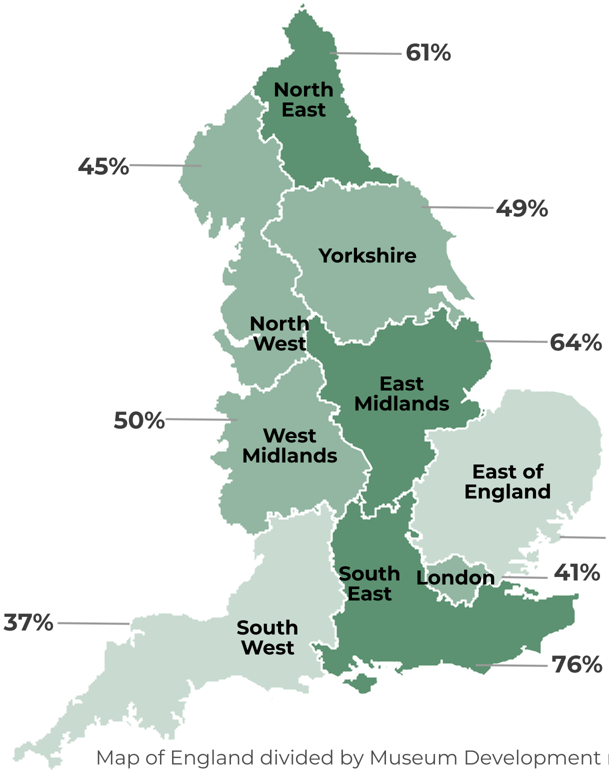
"In 2022/23 what was your total income from admissions?"
(n = 239)

More than half of museums receiving some form of project grant income did so from their Museum Development regional programme

Median project grant income in 2022/23 was £11,600.



How does this differ by region?



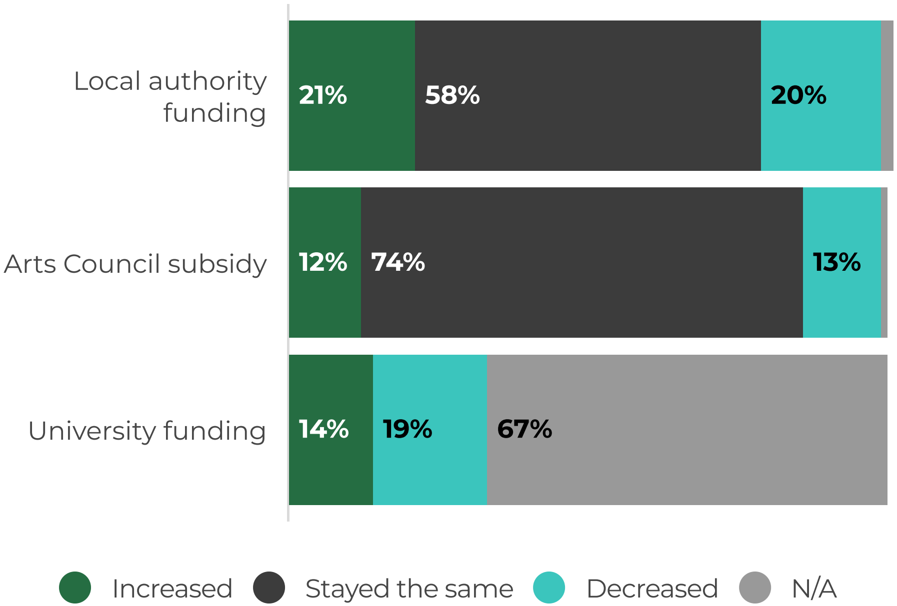
Map of England divided by Museum Development regions

"In 2022/23, did your museum receive project grant income?"
(n = 298)

Of those museums receiving public subsidy income in 2022/23, this was most likely to come from local authority funding

78% of museums receiving public subsidy did so from local authority funding, 26% from the Arts Council subsidy and 6% from University funding.

Of those receiving public subsidy from local authorities, 1 in 5reported that it had decreased compared to the previous year



How does public subsidy income vary?

Median public subsidy income

£224,048

All museums

£2.67m

Large/largest museums

£123,773

Small/medium museums

£5,000

Micro museums

In 2022/23, what regular public subsidy did your museum receive from...?"
(n = 235)

Museum area snapshots

2022/23 snapshots by Arts Council England area

Snapshot: London 2022/23

Museum overview

40% Museums that charge for admissions

13% Wholly volunteer-run museums

71% Museums which are independent

46% Museums with access to outdoor spaces

Workforce and volunteering

65% Museums hiring staff or contracts

2:1 Volunteers to paid staff ratio

10% Volunteer numbers down on 19/20*

10% Volunteer hours down on 19/20*

Audiences

15% Opening hours up on previous year*

30% Museums not open or fewer than 10k visits

87% Visitor numbers up on previous year*

98% Museums providing on-site education sessions

Finance

21% Museums with less than £25k turnover

66% Museums reporting increased expenditure

14% On-site donations down on 19/20*

31% Admissions income down on 19/20*

* Median % change based on constant sample. Other statements present percentage of museums affected

Snapshot: Midlands in 2022/23

Museum overview

58% Museums that charge for admissions

36% Wholly volunteer-run museums

68% Museums which are independent

71% Museums in urban areas

Workforce and volunteering

28% Museums hiring staff or contracts

3:1 Volunteers to paid staff ratio

16% Volunteer numbers down on 19/20*

19% Volunteer hours down on 19/20*

Audiences

25% Opening hours up on previous year*

51% Museums not open or fewer than 10k visits

49% Visitor numbers up on previous year*

86% Museums providing on-site education sessions

Finance

31% Museums with less than £25k turnover

65% Museums reporting increased expenditure

13% On-site donations down on 19/20*

14% Admissions income down on 19/20*

* Median % change based on constant sample. Other statements present percentage of museums affected

Snapshot: North in 2022/23

Museum overview

57% Museums that charge for admissions

19% Wholly volunteer-run museums

44% Museums which are independent

79% Museums in urban areas

Workforce and volunteering

54% Museums hiring staff or contracts

3:1 Volunteers to paid staff ratio

0% Volunteer numbers down on 19/20*

15% Volunteer hours down on 19/20*

Audiences

20% Opening hours up on previous year*

32% Museums not open or fewer than 10k visits

52% Visitor numbers up on previous year*

94% Museums providing on-site education sessions

Finance

14% Museums with less than £25k turnover

72% Museums reporting increased expenditure

13% On-site donations down on 19/20*

3% Admissions income up on 19/20*

* Median % change based on constant sample. Other statements present percentage of museums affected

Snapshot: South East in 2022/23

Museum overview

52% Museums that charge for admissions

36% Wholly volunteer-run museums

75% Museums which are independent

66% Museums in urban areas

Workforce and volunteering

36% Museums hiring staff or contracts

6:1 Volunteers to paid staff ratio

3% Volunteer numbers down on 19/20*

2% Volunteer hours down on 19/20*

Audiences

17% Opening hours up on previous year*

54% Museums not open or fewer than 10k visits

50% Visitor numbers up on previous year*

94% Museums providing on-site education sessions

Finance

37% Museums with less than £25k turnover

62% Museums reporting increased expenditure

11% On-site donations up on 19/20*

16% Admissions income up on 19/20*

* Median % change based on constant sample. Other statements present percentage of museums affected

Snapshot: South West in 2022/23

Museum overview

62% Museums that charge for admissions

37% Wholly volunteer-run museums

82% Museums which are independent

65% Museums in urban areas

Workforce and volunteering

35% Museums hiring staff or contracts

6:1 Volunteers to paid staff ratio

2% Volunteer numbers down on 19/20*

14% Volunteer hours down on 19/20*

Audiences

18% Opening hours up on previous year*

52% Museums not open or fewer than 10k visits

45% Visitor numbers up on previous year*

92% Museums providing on-site education sessions

Finance

33% Museums with less than £25k turnover

59% Museums reporting increased expenditure

1% On-site donations down on 19/20*

4% Admissions income down on 19/20*

* Median % change based on constant sample. Other statements present percentage of museums affected

Data sharing, use and attributes

Museum Development England is the term used by the nine regional Museum Development providers across England when delivering activity and collaboration at a national Level. Museum Development England is core funded by Arts Council England. Our goal is to collaborate to enable diverse, inclusive and innovative museums that welcome people from all backgrounds. Together we create a thriving museum sector by raising standards, driving excellence and training people working in museums. Find out more here.

The Annual Museum Survey is operated by South West Museum Development and hosted by Bristol City Council with support from PS Research. For further information on the process undertaken for the Annual Museum Survey 2023 or to access this report in an accessible format, please contact museum.data@bristol.gov.uk.

For further information on the Annual Museum Survey reports please visit:
https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/what-we-do/annual-museum-survey/

Thank you

To the 701 museums across England who took part in the Annual Museum Survey 2023 and who made this report possible.

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