

Ontario Museum Association

COVID-19 Survey Key Findings

Data collected March 20-April 1, 2020, 110 respondents

Data reflect responses at date collected

Introduction

The Ontario Museum Association's COVID-19 Impact Survey shows that museum in the province, alongside other sectors, are experiencing dramatic impacts as a result of the global pandemic. These results captured over a 10-day period reflect the knowledge available to the respondents at the time of their submission; many have seen drastic changes since they answered the questions. The data show a snapshot in time from individual respondents as they manage with a situation that is changing every day.

Operations

- All museums have closed their doors to the public as a matter of health and safety; some have been closed for three weeks already, and many have no estimated date to reopen. With some cities announcing closures to the end of June, museums will be affected for a significant portion of their year.
- Seasonal museums have delayed their opening dates, putting more pressure on their only months of public-facing operations
- Many museums, where possible, have employees working from home
- Vital protection and preservation of collections and sites is ongoing with only essential staff
- All Ontario museums will have serious challenges ramping up operations when they can reopen

Revenue

- Total revenue loss for April 2020 is projected at 64%
- 85% of museums will lose more than 30% of April 2020 revenue
- 63% of museums will lose all revenue for April 2020
- 66% of not-for-profit museums will lose fundraising event revenue
- 64% of museums anticipate increased costs
- Affected areas of revenue include admission fees, donations, fundraising events, memberships, programs, sales of goods and services, and facility rentals



Human Resources

- 28% of respondents had made staff layoffs at the time of answering the Survey, more layoffs have since followed
- 68% have delayed or cancelled the hiring of summer or seasonal staff
- Two-thirds of museums report potential for further job loss

Digital and Virtual Engagement

- 52% of respondents have an existing strategy for virtual or digital engagement, with another 13% developing a strategy
- 39% of rural museums report an existing strategy for digital engagement
- Resources required to increase digital engagement include staff training, technology access, and increased staffing levels

OMA Support Actions

- The three most frequently-suggested support actions for the OMA are: digital toolkits, webinars, and advocacy
- Other suggestions included advisory services, promotion of museums and social media, and connecting people together for discussions