

## Congress 2025

# FACING UP TO THE CRISIS *Invested and innovative museums*

**Friday 3 October 2025**

**Auditorium of Pavillon Dufour - Château de Versailles & Zoom**

In recent months, numerous announcements of restrictions and budget cuts have been made in the cultural sector, and museums have obviously not been spared. This situation has had many effects, impacting programming, the nature of activities, priorities, and human resources management within museums. Projects already underway have been downgraded, new projects have had to be abandoned, there is a risk of a diminished public service, positions are frozen or even eliminated, recruitments postponed, and there is increasing pressure to find new sources of self-generated revenue. This list resembles, if not a catalogue of disillusionment, at least a new stage in the evolution of a trend that began several years ago and remains unfortunately persistent.

It is no longer just about getting through a difficult period for our museums, but about learning to deal with it—and more importantly, to do things differently. How, then, can museums adapt? For several years now, museums have attempted to invent new models, particularly new modes of financing, in an effort to develop their own resources and reduce their reliance solely on public funding. But external resources are neither abundant nor inexhaustible, especially since the economic difficulties are not limited to the public sector.

Faced with this situation, creativity is being harnessed to bring about real, lasting, and sustainable change. How can museums continue to fulfil their mission of preservation and dissemination with fewer resources? How can they continue to "be museums" in an unfavourable and rapidly transforming economic context? This challenging situation is prompting museum professionals to rethink their roles and responsibilities.

Many initiatives are emerging in France and abroad to test new operating methods: resource sharing, co-productions, economic partnerships developed at the local level, new loyalty programs, better integration into the local community, patron circles, crowdfunding campaigns, innovative sponsorships... This day of discussion will highlight these experiences, which often also intersect with concerns related to ecological sustainability and greater societal engagement by museums.

How can we envision museums in harmony with their social and economic environments? How can we imagine museums that are more integrated into society, where the stories conveyed by the institution resonate with its partners and foster strong, stable, and lasting bonds of attachment?