

Museums in London

Natural history museum hall with skeleton

Key information

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Overview

London is known for its museums, from world-famous institutions like the Natural History Museum to a range of smaller, local museums. They attract visitors, contribute to the economy, provide educational opportunities and drive cultural engagement across the city. While the Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on the sector, museums continued to adapt,

driving cultural engagement across the city.

This report provides an overview of London's museums, including their distribution, size, funding, visitor demographics, and the role of the Mayor's cultural programmes.

[Read the paper \(pdf\)](#)

Where are London's museums?

According to Arts Council England, as of May 2026 there were 143 museums in London that were accredited (134) or working towards accreditation (9). Arts Council England's Accreditation Scheme is designed to set nationally agreed standards for museums to ensure they are sustainable, well-managed, and trusted by the public and funders.

Graphic showing number of accredited museums

Figure -

Source: Arts Council England, UK Museum Accreditation Scheme, List of Accredited Museums in the UK and List of Working Towards Museums, May 2026

The GLA's  shows the location of London's museums and galleries.

Museums and galleries are mostly concentrated in central London, particularly around cultural hubs such as South Kensington (including the V&A and Science Museum) and the South Bank (home to the Tate Modern). In contrast, outer boroughs like Enfield, Havering and Hillingdon have fewer institutions.

Map showing locations of museums and galleries in London

Figure -

Source: Greater London Authority, Cultural Infrastructure Map 2023 - London Datastore, 2023. Note: Data was collected in the spring and summer of 2022 and published in 2023. Dataset includes both museums and public galleries

How big are London's museums?

The Annual Museum Survey categorises museums into 'sizes' based on annual visitor figures. These range from 'micro' museums that record fewer than 10,000 visitors annually, to the 'largest' museums that record more than 100,000 visitors a year.

Generally, London has more of the 'largest' museums and fewer 'micro' museums compared to the national average. However, in 2024-25, London still had more micro museums than any other type of museum (28 per cent of all museums in London).

Chart showing museums by size

Figure -

Source: Museum Development England, Annual Museum Survey, November 2025. Note: The Annual Museum Survey's 2025 response rate for was 37 per cent in London and 56 per cent nationally. 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. Survey results do not include National museums or museums that are not in Arts Council England's Accreditation scheme.

How likely are London's museums to charge for entry?

Museums in London are less likely to charge admission than museums in the rest of England. 59 per cent of London's accredited non-National museums do not charge for admission, compared to 47 per cent of accredited non-National museums in England.

Chart showing admissions policy for museums in London

Figure -

Source: Museum Development England, Annual Museum Survey, November 2025. Note: The Annual Museum Survey's 2025 response rate for was 37 per cent in London and 56 per cent nationally. 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. *Survey results do not include National museums or museums that are not in Arts Council England's Accreditation scheme.

However, average admission charges are higher in London than elsewhere. The median average admission charge in London for an adult is £12, compared to £8 in England, and for a child is £6 compared to £5 in England.

Graphic showing ticket prices

Figure -

Source: Museum Development England, Annual Museum Survey, November 2025. Note: The Annual Museum Survey's 2025 response rate for was 37 per cent in London and 56 per cent nationally. 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

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