



Museums at Night

Museums at Night 2010 Evaluation Executive Summary

An independent report by Cath Hume & Pam Jarvis (sam)
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What is Museums at Night?

From Friday 14th - Sunday 16th May 2010, hundreds of cultural and heritage organisations opened their doors after hours for torchlight tours, ghost walks, twilight screenings, midnight murder mysteries, all-night sleepovers and late openings. They aimed to welcome new visitors into their venues to have fun and discover that they wanted to explore museums more often.

Culture24 is at the centre of this celebration: finding funding; motivating museums to join in; supporting them to devise different events and experiences to tempt visitors in; encouraging collaboration and building skills; brokering partnerships with government departments, cultural agencies and media; and managing campaign communications.

Key statistics from the 2010 campaign

286 organisations	345 creative events
85,000 visitors across 3 nights	47% of visitors were new to the venue
15% of visitors had not been to a museum for over 1 year	5% of visitors had never been to a museum
97% of visitors were inspired to visit another museum	85% rated their visit at >8 out of 10
198 press articles in 158 publications	Estimated advertising value of £400,000
92% of venues will take part again next year	£75,000 funding Cost under £1 per visitor



© **Paul J White:** Weird or Wonderful - girl in a perspex tube (Museums at Night Flickr group)



© **Matthew Fox:** Eden Project (Museums at Night Flickr group)

Key Successes:

Museums at Night is:

- **An impetus** to get the sector to focus on engagement
 - **A catalyst** for sector organisations to explore new ways of engaging with visitors
 - **A driver** for new partnerships between cultural and heritage organisations and other service providers
 - **A new model** for marketing that focuses on promoting individual events rather than the brand itself
 - **An opportunity** for sector development
 - **A cost-effective and inclusive** way for organisations of all sizes to respond to the concept in their own way, based on local conditions
 - **Inspiring** the sector and the public. The idea of opening at night allows organisations a way to play with new types of events which Culture24 then capitalises on
 - **A strong offer** that is fun, affordable and accessible to everyone
 - **A way to position museums in a different light.** The project is changing public perceptions of culture, heritage and the arts and encouraging them to go into a museum or gallery
 - **Actively advocating** for the whole cultural sector
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Recommendations:

Communicate the value: Museums at Night is a unique UK-wide sector collaboration that is building a successful track record in cost-effective audience engagement

Extend the partnerships: Build on the goodwill from 2010 to extend partnerships and identify new partners in heritage, media and other national organisations and museums (National Trust, English Heritage, Arts Council England, Museums Association)

Plan further ahead: Many cultural sector organisations work on a long planning schedule

Capitalise on being a force for change: The campaign generates new models for collaboration and stimulates ideas for audience engagement. Culture24 now needs to:

Share the knowledge: bring museums together for networking and knowledge exchange

Build political capital around awareness of the campaign's impacts and achievements

Build critical mass: Engage more partners, broaden regional spread and address the less engaged areas identified this year

Act national - think local: Raise national profile whilst retaining the campaign's strengths in effective delivery at a local level



Above: Family Fun at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

Museums at Night is:

Managed and delivered by Culture24

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