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More than 30 museums across Southern California will offer free general admission on Sunday, March 16, for this year's Museums Free-for-All event.LOS ANGELES (KABC) – It's that time of year again!More than 30 museums across Southern California will offer free general admission on Sunday, March 16, for this year's Museums Free-for-All event. Whether you're looking to explore art, cultural heritage, film or natural history, there's something for everyone. As Los Angeles and Southern California continue to recover after the devastating fires, we hope to offer a space of comfort and connection for people," said Alexa Nishimoto, the SoCal Museums president and marketing associate for the Japanese American National Museum. How does Museums Free-for-All work? The offer is for general museum admission only and doesn't apply to specialty ticketed exhibits. Regular parking fees apply at each museum, so be sure to check the museums' websites for hours, directions, and other visitor information. This year, many organizations are offering Metro riders with a TAP card special discounts on March 16. Additionally, some museums are offering admission on Saturday, March 15 instead. Here's a list of participating museums. Academy Museum of Motion Pictures Advance reservations are encouraged, and a standby line will be available. Click here to make a reservation. American Museum of Ceramic Art Advance reservations are required. Click here to make a reservation. Autry Museum of the American West Advance reservations are required. Click here to learn more. TAP card holders always receive \$4 off regular admission at the Autry. Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College Bowers Museum Free General Admission for walk ups only. TAP card holders get a 10% discount on full-priced items in the museum store. The discount can't be combined with other discounts. Exclusions may apply. The Broad Advance reservations are encouraged here, but walk ups are available daily. California African American Museum California Botanic Garden Free admission on Saturday, March 15, in lieu of Sunday, March 16. Advance reservations are recommended. Visit www.calbg.org to make a reservation. Catalina Museum for Art & History Columbia Memorial Space Center Craft Contemporary Please check in at the front desk to receive an admission pass. TAP card holders receive a 10% discount in the museum store. Forest Lawn Museum Fowler Museum Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum The Getty Center Advance reservations required. TAP card holders receive a 10% discount in the museum store. GRAMMY Museum TAP card holders receive a 10% discount in the museum store. Hammer Museum TAP card holders receive a 10% discount in the museum store. Holocaust Museum LA Advance reservations are required. Click here to make a reservation. Institute Contemporary Art, LA International Printing Museum Free tours on Saturday, March 15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Reservations are required, click here to learn more. La Brea Tar Pits Advance reservations are required. Click here to make a reservation. La Plaza de Cultura y Artes TAP card holders receive a 20% discount in the LA Tienzi museum store. Lincoln Memorial Shrine Los Angeles County Museum of Art (ACMA) Advance reservations are recommended. Visit lacma.org to make a reservation. The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Advance reservations are recommended. Visit moca.org to make a reservation. Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) TAP card holders receive a 10% discount in the museum store. Museum of Tolerance TAP card holders receive a 10% discount in the museum store. Santa Barbara Museum of Art Advance reservations are recommended. Visit sbma.net to make a reservation. Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Advance reservations are recommended. Visit sbnature.org to make a reservation. Sea Center not included. Santa Monica History Museum TAP card holders receive a ticket for free admission for future use, or gift it to a friend. Skirball Cultural Center Advance tickets are strongly recommended for Noah's Ark. Visit skirball.org to make a reservation. Sunnyslands Center & Gardens Historic house tour requires advance tickets. Visit sunnyslands.org to make a reservation. USC Pacific Asia Museum The Wendt Museum Copyright © 2025 KABC Television, LLC. All rights reserved. The question of why many UK museums offer free entry is a complex one, rooted in history, political decisions, and a commitment to public access to culture. The simple answer is that a combination of government funding, historical precedent, and specific financial mechanisms make free admission possible for many, though not all, museums. Primarily, national museums in the UK, which house collections of national significance, are funded directly by the central government and, therefore, offer free entry to their permanent collections. However, the situation isn't quite as straightforward as a blanket "all museums are free" approach. The Roots of Free Admission: A Historical Perspective The origins of free museum entry can be traced back centuries, particularly with the foundation of institutions like the British Museum. Founded in 1753, it was established following the bequest of Sir Hans Sloane's collection to the nation. The agreement stipulated an exchange for £20,000 to Sloane's heirs, Parliament would create a freely accessible public museum. This set a precedent for public access to knowledge and culture that has influenced museum policy to this day. The British Museum's doors opened in 1759 to "all studious and serious persons," thus creating the world's first free, national public museum. The concept of accessible public museums gained traction during the 19th century, and many followed suit, often funded through public philanthropy or government initiatives. However, these institutions often relied on a mix of funding models. The Shift to Universal Free Admission The pivotal moment for widespread free admission came much later. In 2001, a significant shift occurred when the UK government, with collaboration between departments like the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Treasury, enabled universal free entry. A crucial aspect was the Chancellor's change to VAT regulations, which made free entry financially viable for many museums. This change effectively reduced the financial burden on museums and allowed them to thrive under this new model. The idea was to democratize access to culture and heritage. This move has had a profound impact on museum attendance and public engagement, fostering a culture of easy access and learning. However, it's critical to understand that this model primarily applies to national museums and some regional institutions, not all across the board. Funding Models: How Do Museums Make Money? While national museums enjoy consistent government funding, other museums rely on a diverse range of income sources. These sources can include: Core Funding: Government grants or local authority funding. Grants: Funding from charitable trusts and foundations. Trading: Income from shops, cafes, and events. Contracts: Payments for specific services or projects. Fundraising: Donations from the public and patrons. Membership Schemes: Revenue from patrons subscribing to memberships. Admission Fees: Charges for special exhibitions or ticketed events (not always free). Corporate Sponsorship: Financial support from businesses. Investment Income: Returns on financial investments. The balance between these sources differs greatly depending on the museum's scope, collection, and whether it's a national, regional, or independent museum. National museums are primarily supported by the government (DCMS), while regional museums often have a mix of local government support and fundraising. Changes to Free Admission The landscape for free admission to museums is constantly evolving. In the past decade, there's been a tightening of financial circumstances, with some galleries and museums previously offering free entry have begun introducing admission charges, sparking debate. This highlights the vulnerability of free admission when funding is squeezed. This has caused a divide amongst culture commentators, emphasising the reliance of some museums on visitor income. While most of London's major museums and galleries remain free, the challenges facing some regional institutions underscore the complex and changing nature of museum funding. The British Museum: A Case Study The British Museum is a prime example of a national museum funded by the government. As a non-departmental public body, it operates at arm's length from government but is accountable to parliament. Its funding comes from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS). This funding model ensures that the museum can maintain free access to its permanent collections for the public. The British Museum is indeed a charity, but receives considerable government funding to operate and support its free access policy. It's worth noting that even with government funding, the British Museum relies heavily on diverse revenue streams, such as fundraising, membership schemes, and trading to support all its activities. Fundraising can be volatile, and the British Museum's income is susceptible to fluctuations in donations and other external factors. The museums collections are considered to be of national importance. The Importance of Free Museums The free entry policy for many UK museums is not just about visitor numbers; it's deeply connected to democratic access to culture, history, and knowledge. It ensures that people from all backgrounds can access education and inspiration regardless of their financial circumstances. This public accessibility to museums serves to fulfil the original aim of national museums to provide access to collections of national importance to everyone. Museums are vital public spaces that bring people together, foster learning, and inspire creativity. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) 1. What are the reasons for free admission to museums? 2. What is the role of DCMS in funding museums? 3. How do museums make money besides government funding? 4. How does the British Museum generate revenue through various means including fundraising, trading (shops and cafes), membership schemes, corporate sponsorship, and investment income? 5. What happens if a museum has to start charging entry fees after being free? 6. How does the introduction of admission fees for previously free museums can be polarising, with commentators and the public often critical of such moves, emphasizing accessibility issues. 7. Is it possible to visit museums for free in London? 8. How do museums ensure that their collections are preserved and cared for? 9. What are some of the most famous artifacts at the British Museum? 10. How do museums ensure that their collections are preserved and cared for? 11. What are some of the most famous artifacts at the British Museum? 12. How do museums ensure that their collections are preserved and cared for? 13. What if a free museum relies on government funding that it loses? If a free museum loses essential government funding, it may face financial challenges, potentially leading to service reductions, temporary closures, or the introduction of admission fees. 14. How does the difference between national museums and local museums? National museums are directly funded by the central government and hold collections of national significance. Local museums are typically funded by local authorities or through independent fundraising and tend to have collections relevant to their region. 15. How many free museums does London offer? London is known for its free museums with a huge number available. Most major museums and even small commercial galleries offer free entry, making London a popular destination for culture enthusiasts. In the everyday struggle of making cuts and savings in a high-cost living city such Oslo, it's not 'be yourself up: unbelievable but true, enjoying the beauty, history, and culture of the city as a student, and especially for free, is possible! And if you don't have the patience to glean the city's offer, don't worry, we got your back: thanks to this ultimate guide, serenely wandering in museums cost-free has never been so easy. The time to discover the city's gems that await you has come. The library at the Museum of Oslo. Photo: Eva Zandonà / Universitاس Museums with free entrance on a special day of the week! The Museum of Oslo A detail of the exhibition "Cityscapes – capturing Oslo" at the Museum of Oslo. Photo: Eva Zandonà / Universitاس Let's get started from the Museum of Oslo, the perfect place if you'd love to simply discover more about the city you're living in. Based in one of Oslo's most beautiful green spaces, Frognerparken, it encompasses numerous exhibitions that focus on the history of the city from different perspectives, offering an interesting insight into urban development, everyday life, and the people of Oslo. An original, unrepeatable experience, it offers a unique opportunity to explore the city's history through the eyes of its residents. The exhibition "Your breathe, your voice" is a collection of images taken by the photographer Torbjørn Møen, which can be seen as a tribute to the role that the river Akerselva has been playing over years – as the city's natural green artery. The Labour Museum is open only two days, on Saturday and Sunday, but it always has free entrance for everyone. Website: bibliotek@osломuseum.no Moreover, the librarian is available to provide students with support for their thesis' research. Website: the Museum of Oslo 2. The Theatre Museum The Theatre Museum is a small exposition co-located in the same place of the Museum of Oslo, in Frognerparken. Therefore, as for the Museum of Oslo, it has free entrance every Thursday. 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