

GUIDELINES ON MUSEUM ACCESSIBILITY IN CHINA



Global
Disability
Fund



中國博物館協會
Chinese Museums Association



Published in 2025 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France;
UNESCO Regional Office for East Asia, Waijiaogongyu 5-15-3, Jianguomenwai Compound, Beijing 100600, People's Republic of China;
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Foreword


This document integrates international museum accessibility concepts with current relevant Chinese laws, regulations, policy documents, and standards. Grounded in the current state of museum development in China, this document integrates expert insights from diverse fields, including museum professionals and disability specialists. The result is a set of guidelines that balance international perspective with local practicalities.

This document has been drafted in accordance with the provisions of GB/T 1.1 - 2020 Directives for Standardization - Part 1: Rules for Structure and Drafting of Standardization Documents.

Please note that certain contents of this document may involve patents. The issuing bodies of this document assume no responsibility for identifying such patents.

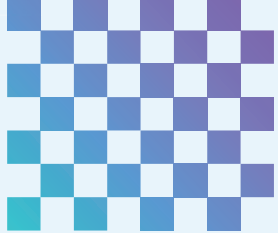
This document is jointly developed by the Chinese Museums Association (CMA) and the UNESCO Regional Office for East Asia.

The principal drafters and their roles are as follows: Ai Jingfang and Yang Xiyan of the Chinese Museums Association coordinated the overall drafting and compilation of the document; Zhao Tiantian, Pan Pan, Liu Qingqing, Xu Liyao, Yang Hanlin, Luan Ou, Zhang Ke, Kang Xiaohui, Li Shijie, Zhao Yijun, Gao Yuan, and Xie Ying contributed to individual chapters and the organization of reference materials.



This document will be revised periodically to reflect evolving social conditions and advances in accessibility, ensuring its contents remain relevant and applicable.

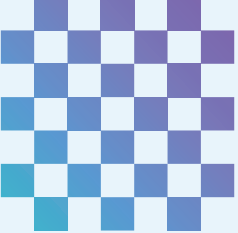
The CMA and UNESCO Regional Office for East Asia oversee the administration of these guidelines. Comments or suggestions for improvement are welcome and may be directed to the administrative group (CMA Secretariat: Email: zgbwgxh@vip.sina.com; UNESCO Regional Office for East Asia: Email: beijing.culture@unesco.org) for consideration in future revisions.



1

General Provisions







1. General Provisions

1.1 Purpose

This document was developed following the implementation of the *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Building Accessible Environments* (2023) and as a result of the joint project “Accessible Museums for Persons with Disabilities”, implemented by UNESCO Regional Office for East Asia and Chinese Museum Association during 2024-2025 with support of the Global Disability Fund. It provides actionable guidelines for improving accessibility across all museum types in China. By integrating accessibility principles into the entire lifecycle of museum: planning, construction, management, and operation, the document aims to transition from basic infrastructure toward institutionalized, sustainable, and inclusive cultural services. Ultimately, it ensures that all visitors – including persons with disabilities, elders, and children – can access museums equitably and enjoy a high-quality cultural experience.

1.2 Principles

The development and implementation of this document are guided by the following fundamental principles:

1.2.1 Sector-led and context-specific implementation

These guidelines emphasize the museum sector’s leadership in establishing standards and coordinating implementation. Accessibility solutions must be tailored to specific museum types, architectural conditions, visitor demographics, and local socioeconomic contexts. This ensures that planning remains adaptive and allows for scalable and phased implementation.

1.2.2 Safety-focused with balanced coordination

Accessibility initiatives must be harmonized with cultural heritage conservation, public safety, and the strategic allocation of resources. This document advocates for enhanced regulatory oversight and robust safety measures to balance diverse operational requirements. The objective is to ensure that development is simultaneously safe, inclusive, and resource-efficient.



1.2.3 People-centered and equal participation

Accessibility is grounded in the fundamental commitment to human dignity and universal rights. By addressing the diverse requirements of various disability types and user groups, the museum provides comprehensive support to ensure equitable, full, and seamless participation in all activities and services.

1.2.4 Universal design as a priority

Prioritizing universal design principles helps create solutions that are inherently inclusive and responsive to a broad spectrum of user needs. By implementing strategies that benefit the greatest number of people, museums can enhance the overall accessibility and quality of the environment for all visitors.

1.2.5 Comprehensive coverage and coordinated advancement

Accessibility must be integrated across the entire museum lifecycle, encompassing site planning, architectural design, heritage renovations, exhibitions, educational programming, and public services. To ensure coherence and impact, museums should establish standardized requirements and formal cross-departmental coordination mechanisms.

1.2.6 Social participation and continuous improvement

Active involvement of diverse stakeholders – including community advocates and accessibility experts – is essential in the planning, oversight, and evaluation of museum initiatives. By fostering formal communication channels and feedback loops, museums can ensure a collaborative approach that drives sustainable, long-term progress in accessibility.

1.2.7 Technological empowerment and innovation-driven development

Digital technologies, smart devices, and emerging innovative tools enables museums to pioneer new models for the accessible museum experience. By embracing these advancements, museums can diversify their offerings and enhance the overall availability of inclusive cultural services.



1.3 Scope

1.3.1 Museums

These guidelines pertain to all public museums, memorial halls, and exhibition centers across the national territory, regardless of their administrative level or specialization. Non-public and sector-specific institutions are encouraged to adopt this document as a benchmark for their own accessibility standards.

1.3.2 Target audiences

Grounded in the “Museums for All” principle, this document is designed to serve the entire visiting public. Recognizing that any visitor may encounter barriers or possess diverse accessibility requirements, museums should utilize universal design to provide responsive services. While these guidelines are inclusive of all visitors, they prioritize – but are not limited to – the following groups and their specific functional support needs:

(1) Persons with disabilities

Individuals who meet the definition set out in Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD): “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” Museums are responsible for systematically identifying and addressing these requirements across the entire visitor journey.

Note: This includes persons with “invisible disabilities”, whose conditions are not immediately apparent and who may therefore be overlooked.

(2) Elders

Visitors who require support due to age-related changes in sensory, mobility, cognitive, or other functions. Museums should provide age-friendly circulation routes, user-friendly wayfinding tools, clear and simple service information, and adequate seating for rest.

(3) Children

Minors who, due to their developmental stage, may need tailored support in understanding information, adapting to the environment, and perceiving safety. Museums should offer child-safe facilities, child-friendly interpretive materials, age-appropriate educational programming, and necessary rest and care facilities.

(4) Pregnant and nursing women, and caregivers of infants and young children



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Visitors who require dedicated facilities and services due to pregnancy, breastfeeding, or childcare responsibilities – including pregnant women, nursing mothers, and parents or guardians of infants and young children. Museums should provide well-equipped nursing and caregiving spaces, rest areas, and related support.

(5) Persons experiencing temporary or situational barriers

Visitors who temporarily face challenges in perception, mobility, or other functions due to short-term health conditions (e.g., injury, fatigue, sudden illness) or specific environmental circumstances (e.g., low lighting, equipment failure). Museums should offer immediate assistance such as temporary wheelchairs, priority access routes, and emergency communication support.

Museums are encouraged to proactively recognize the diverse – and often overlapping – accessibility needs of visitors. Because an individual's requirements may shift based on context or membership in multiple user groups simultaneously, museums should prioritize flexible and intersectional solutions.

This document recommends that museums provide necessary support for the companions of persons with disabilities and guarantee seamless access for visitors accompanied by service animals.

1.4 Implementation Requirements

For the purposes of accessibility implementation, museums at all levels and of all types are encouraged to consult the following normative documents:

GB 50763-2012 *Codes for accessibility design*

GB 50624-2011 *Construction acceptance and maintenance standards of the barrier-free facilities*

GB 55019-2021 *General codes for accessibility of buildings and municipal engineering projects*

Note: GB 55019-2021, as a mandatory engineering construction standard, came into effect on 1 April 2022. Upon implementation, the following provisions are simultaneously repealed:

– Articles 3.7.3 (3, 5), 4.4.5, 6.2.4 (5), 6.2.7 (4), and 8.1.4 of GB 50763-2012 *Codes for accessibility design*;

– Articles 3.1.12, 3.1.14, 3.14.8, and 3.15.8 of GB 50624-2011 *Construction acceptance and maintenance standards of the barrier-free facilities*.

GB/T 10001.9-2021 *Public information graphical symbols – Part 9: Symbols for accessible facilities*

GB/T 39758-2021 *Accessible design – Application of Braille on signage, equipment and appliances*



GB/T 43351-2023 *Accessible design – Information contents, figuration and display methods of tactile guide maps*

GB/T 31015-2024 *Public information guidance systems – Design and setting principles and requirements for the consideration of accessible needs*

GB/T 37668-2019 *Information technology – Internet content accessibility technical requirements and conformance testing*

GB/Z 41284-2022 *Information accessibility – Testing specification for web content accessibility evaluation*

GB/T 45395-2025 *Information technology – Technical requirements for MiniApp accessibility*

GB/T 44882-2024 *Information technology – Closed captioning*

GB/T 42818.1-2023 *Cognitive accessibility – Part1: General guidelines*

LB/T 096-2025 *Training guidelines for accessible tourism practitioners*

GB/T 36721-2018 *Specification for museum audience service*

JGJ 66-2015 *Code for design of museum building*

WW/T 0092-2018 *Museum dynamic performance evaluation indicators*

Museum dynamic performance evaluation standards (No. 28, 2022, National Cultural Heritage Administration)

Museum rating and evaluation standards (December 2019) (No. 2, 2020, National Cultural Heritage Administration)

1.5 Terms and Definitions

The following terms and definitions apply to these guidelines.

1.5.1 Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the elimination of physical, informational, service-related, and attitudinal barriers through the integration application of design, technology, services, and institutional policies. This framework empowers all individuals – including persons with disabilities, elders, and children – to access and utilize resources equitable and conveniently, fostering full participate in social life. At its core, accessibility is a driver of social inclusion, encompassing four critical dimensions: the physical environment, information interaction, service processes, and governance mechanisms.

[Source: Article 9 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006; Article 1 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Building Accessible Environments, 2023; modified]



1.5.2 Social inclusion

Social inclusion is the proactive design and systemic removal of exclusionary barriers to ensure that all individuals – regardless of ability, age, or background – are respected, valued, and empowered to participate in society. By providing equal access to opportunities and resources, it seeks to eliminate structural inequities and promote a culture of diversity and integration. Its core objective is to move beyond mere access toward a sense of genuine belonging within the social fabric.

1.5.3 Persons with disabilities

In accordance with Article 1 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*: Those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

1.5.4 Accessible museum

An accessible museum is an institution that utilizes physical environmental modifications, inclusive information design, and service innovation to ensure equitable participation for all. By removing physical, informational, and systemic barriers, the museum provides seamless access to knowledge resources and fosters a sense of belonging for diverse groups – including persons with disabilities, older persons, children, and individuals of varied cultural backgrounds. Its core mission is to uphold the right to culture by achieving universal and equitable access to public services.

1.5.5 Barrier-free design/ Accessibility design

A strategic technical approach comprising inclusive product design, assistive technologies, and specialized spatial configurations to eliminate or reduce barriers to mobility, operation, and information. These solutions are designed to enable all visitors to engage in social and cultural life with safety, autonomy, and equity.

1.5.6 Accessible wayfinding and information systems

An integrated network of signage, digital interfaces, and environmental cues designed to identify and explain barrier-free routes and services. By utilizing multi-sensory modalities



–including visual, tactile, and auditory formats – the system provides all visitors with clear, user-selectable information. This multimodal approach ensures that individuals can navigate spaces and access services with safety, autonomy, and efficiency, regardless of their sensory or cognitive requirements.

1.5.7 Information accessibility

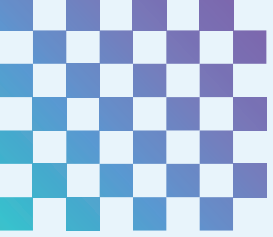
The strategic application of technology and environmental optimization to eliminate barriers stemming from differences in sensory ability, technical literacy, or situation constraints. It ensures that all individuals can equitably access, interact with, and utilize information under any circumstances.

[Source: GB/Z 41284-2022, Article 3.1.1, modified]

1.5.8 Inclusive education

A pedagogical framework that adapts content, learning environments, and delivery methods to respond to the diverse requirements of all learners. It fosters a culture where both educators and participants embrace diversity as an enrichment of the learning experience. While prioritizing the full integration of persons with disabilities into mainstream programming, this approach provides tailored assistance and specialized facilities for those who require or prefer specific accommodations.

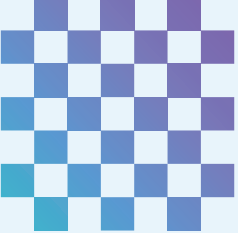
[Source: UNESCO Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All, 2005; modified]



2

Museum Facility for Accessibility







2. Museum Facility for Accessibility

The development of barrier-free physical environment is the fundamental prerequisite for enabling equal autonomous, and safe participation in museum life. This chapter establishes the principles, technical standards, and implementation protocols for museum sites, architectural structures, exhibition galleries, and wayfinding systems. This chapter aims to create a systematic, human-centered environment that guarantees a seamless, comfortable, and dignified experience across the entire visitor journey.

2.1 Accessible Circulation and Service Facilities in Museums

Accessible circulation refers to features that enable visitors with accessibility needs to navigate pathways autonomously, enter and exit buildings, and use transportation. Accessible service facilities encompass restroom, rest areas, and service counters within the museum to ensure autonomous and safe use by persons with accessibility needs.

2.1.1 General provisions

- (1) Museums must ensure that all new construction, renovation, and expansion projects strictly adhere to national laws and accessibility mandates, rigorously implement the associated accessibility construction standards, and ensure that accessible facilities are planned, designed, constructed, accepted, and delivered simultaneously with the main project, while effectively connecting with surrounding accessible facilities to achieve continuity.
- (2) Existing museum facilities that are currently non-compliant or feature incomplete accessibility must undertake systemic remediation through installation, upgrades, or structural renovations. All interventions must ensure functional continuity with the surrounding public infrastructure. These upgrades should be executed in strict accordance with statutory regulations and technical standards, informed by a comprehensive site assessment that evaluates the current physical environment, institutional needs, and feasibility for improvement.
- (3) The system coherence of accessible facilities must be maintained – not only within a single project but also at the interfaces where new facilities meet existing infrastructure.
- (4) Accessible facilities must undergo regular inspections to ensure they are properly maintained, safety-compliant, and free of obstructions.



- (5) Museums must ensure continuous accessible circulation across the site, throughout building interiors, and between separate structures. This network must connect to every accessible entrance and exit. At primary and accessible entry points, it should provide accessible orientation maps. The integration of tactile map, audio announcements, and clear tactile pathways is strongly encouraged to support independent navigation.
- (6) Where changes in floor level or steps occur along primary pedestrian routes, museums must provide accessible ramps or elevators to ensure uninterrupted vertical access.
- (7) Pedestrian pathways serving accessible facilities must be designed as barrier-free routes.
- (8) Flooring along accessible routes and towards accessible facilities must be firm and slip-resistant, low- or non-reflective, while avoiding thick carpeting to ensure ease of wheelchair movements.

2.1.1.1 Accessible circulation facilities

- (1) The primary entrance/exit of museum buildings must be fully accessible with ramped access. Throughout operating hours, all accessible entrances and exits must remain functional and open in synchronization.
- (2) Multi-story museum buildings must provide at least one accessible elevator/lift, clearly designated with universal accessibility signage. Both elevator/lift lobbies and cabins must be equipped with auditory arrival and floor announcements. All internal components – including control panels, handrails, and emergency communication systems – must comply with established accessibility standards.
- (3) Museum parking areas, whether indoor and outdoor, must include designated accessible parking bays specifically for persons with disabilities. A dedicated accessible passenger loading zone (drop-off/pick-up area) must be provided in close proximity to the primary entrance.

2.1.1.2 Accessible service facilities

- (1) Museums must provide at least one independent accessible restroom (unisex) located near standard facilities. Alternatively, they may provide fully integrated public restrooms that comply with universal accessibility standards. These facilities must ensure sufficient space for maneuverability and be equipped with the necessary assistive fixtures.
- (2) Public restrooms located near children's galleries, interactive zones, activity rooms,



and educational spaces must be designed for pediatric ease of use. Where feasible, the provision of independent family restrooms (all-gender) is strongly recommended to accommodate caregivers and children, ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all users.

(3) Museums must provide at least one dedicated nursing room, designed and located in accordance with the principles of safety, hygiene, privacy, and accessibility.

(4) Museum theaters, auditoriums, educational spaces, dining areas, must provide designated wheelchair spaces or removable seating to accommodate visitors with mobility aids. The quantity and distribution of these accessible positions must strictly adhere to established occupancy and accessibility standards.

(5) Museums must provide low-height service counter in all public areas to accommodate visitors using wheelchairs or mobility aids. These surfaces must feature standard knee and toe clearances and be positioned with a sufficient turning radius. This requirement applies to all transactional and informational points – including ticketing, exchange counter, information desk, reception, retail cashiers, security checkpoints, baggage storage, museum shops – as well as automated facilities such as water dispenser, vending machines, guide device rental machines, and lockers. All transit corridors, specifically security lanes, must maintain the minimum clear width required for wheelchair passage.

2.1.2 Accessible circulation and service facilities within the protection area of immovable cultural heritage

2.1.2.1 Scope of application

(1) These requirements apply to the installation of accessible facilities within the protection boundaries of immovable cultural heritage (including ancient sites and structures, grottoes, modern historical landmarks, etc.) located within publicly museum zones.

(2) Historical museums, site museums, memorial halls, and other institutions housing immovable cultural heritage should utilize these requirements as the primary benchmark for accessibility retrofitting.

2.1.2.2 Basic requirements

(1) The construction or renovation of accessible facilities within the heritage protection zones must be executed under the oversight of cultural heritage authorities, supported by



feasibility assessments and expert consultations. Conservation remains the priority while innovative technologies and non-invasive methods are encouraged to ensure accessibility is achieved without compromising the site's historical integrity.

(2) Accessible facilities within heritage zones must be non-permanent and movable. Installation must be fully reversible, utilizing only soft or protective interfaces at points of contact with the historic structure. Facilities must not be directly fixed to original surfaces; drilling, anchoring, adhesive bonding, or any other invasive mounting techniques are strictly prohibited to ensure the heritage structure remains entirely undamaged.

(3) Materials, colors, and textures for accessible facilities and signage must provide high visual contrast for ease of identification while remaining harmonious with the heritage environment.

(4) Accessible tour routes must be designed in accordance with the specific site conditions of the immovable cultural heritage. Accessibility improvements along these routes should enable visitors with accessibility needs to reach the exterior perimeters of the heritage structures. Internal spaces must also be upgraded to ensure accessibility to the heritage interiors.

2.1.2.3 Requirements for accessible facilities installation

(1) In consideration of the original proportions of heritage buildings, accessibility installations must be compact and unobtrusive. These features should be designed to avoid obstructing general visitor flow or comprising emergency evacuation routes.

(2) Accessible route may incorporate the unique architecture features of a heritage site, such as historic verandas, to serve as transitional or connecting paths.

(3) Heritage structures repurposed as exhibition galleries, display rooms, auditoriums, or reception halls must provide at least one primary accessible entrance and exit.

(4) Museums must provide at least one accessible stall within each gender's public restroom that meets universal accessibility standards.

(5) In heritage spaces equipped with broadcasting screens, digital displays, or multimedia services, at least one designated wheelchair space must be integrated into the audience area.



2.2 Accessible Information Signage in Museums

2.2.1 Systematized requirements for accessible information signage

In accordance with relevant national standards for accessible construction in China, the systematized implementation of accessible signage must adhere to the following requirements to ensure that visitors with accessible needs can access information on an equitable basis, facilitating autonomous navigation and full participation in museum activities.

2.2.1.1 Classification and form specifications of signage

- (1) Museums shall implement a comprehensive visual signage system comprising identificatory (name), directional, interpretive (explanatory), cautionary (warning), and regulatory (restrictive) signs that utilize standardized static symbols to ensure universal comprehension and efficient flow.
- (2) Tactile signage must provide critical navigation data through Braille, embossed characters, haptic buttons, and tactile floor maps.
- (3) Tactile indicators must be integrated into accessibility facilities.

2.2.1.2 Technical parameters and installation requirements

(1) Visual display standards

Signage must utilize a high-contrast color palette between the background and graphic elements to maximize legibility.

Typography should consist of sans-serif, highly recognizable fonts with optimized character spacing. Font sizes and layout must be calibrated based on standard viewing distances to ensure clear identification, and signs must be strategically positioned to remain unobstructed by architecture features or temporary fixtures.

(2) Tactile signage standards

Tactile signage must be installed at a standardized ergonomic height to facilitate ease of access for visitors with visual impairments, including those who are blind and have low vision. To enhance the discoverability of Braille and tactile elements, acoustic beacons (such as a piece of music or a beeping) should be integrated to alert visitors to the presence of informational touchpoints.



2.2.1.3 Function expansion and compatibility

Information must be delivered via audio and text simultaneously.

2.2.2 Tactile signage

2.2.2.1 Components of tactile signage

- (1) Title.
- (2) Annotation. If the meaning of a sign is self-explanatory, supplementary annotations may be omitted.
- (3) Legend. If the signage utilizes universally recognized tactile symbols without abbreviations, the legend may be omitted.

2.2.2.2 Dimensions of tactile signage

The physical dimensions of tactile signage must be proportional to the volume and complexity of the information provided to ensure legibility and ease of touch.

2.2.2.3 Representation method of tactile signage

- (1) Position the at the top of the tactile signage.
- (2) Place supplementary annotations immediately adjacent to the title.
- (3) Organize content in the following sequence: Title/annotation, followed by corresponding Braille. Arrange multiple signs in descending order of importance.
- (4) Braille, abbreviations, and tactile graphics must be clearly distinguishable by touch and sight.
- (5) Braille must comply with GB/T 39758-2021 and ISO 17049 standards.
- (6) When integrated with large-print, high-contrast text and vibrant colors, tactile elements must enhance visibility and navigation for low-vision individuals.

2.2.2.4 Information content of tactile signage

- (1) Information must be accurate and maintain strict consistency with the corresponding visual signage.
- (2) Design priority must be given to tactile legibility and ease of recognition for touch-based users.
- (3) Content should be concise, providing only essential, high-level information to avoid sensory overload.



(4) Information must be delivered in a dual-format that is both tactilely and visually readable.

2.2.2.5 Installation method of tactile signage

- (1) Install tactile signage in a manner that allows users to easily scan characters and tactile graphics by touch.
- (2) In specific locations, electronic auxiliary devices or audio-information systems may be used as substitute for character-based tactile points.
- (3) Wall-mounted signage must be positioned to ensure the reading surface is accessible and free from architectural or physical obstructions.
- (4) It should be ensured that low vision individuals and the blind can find the installed tactile signage.

2.2.2.6 Materials for tactile signage

- (1) High-quality and highly accurate structural materials should be used.
- (2) The materials used should ensure good tactile readability.
- (3) Materials with shiny surfaces should not be used to avoid glare.
- (4) Materials that may cause allergic reactions, scratches, or even punctures to the touch should not be selected.

2.3 Accessible Environment Design and Facilities in Exhibition Spaces

To promote cultural sharing and inclusive development, museums should fully integrate the concept of accessibility into the design of exhibition spaces and supporting facilities. This ensures that persons with accessibility needs, can enter museum with equal, convenient and comfortable experience.

2.3.1 Accessible circulation routes design

- (1) Circulation routes within the exhibition should be clearly defined, well-lit and easy to follow. Where necessary, guiding support facilities such as tactile guide strips for persons with visual impairments should be provided.
- (2) Circulation routes should generally follow the same path as the standard visiting routes and preferably adopt a continuous, circled or progressive design.
- (3) Transition areas (such as exhibition entrances/exits and areas between temporary



and permanent displays) should include buffer zones to support orientation and visual adjustment.

(4) Both sides of circulation routes should maintain stable and predictable boundaries, while ensuring that all visitors can approach display cases. Sufficient space should be reserved in front of cases for pausing and viewing.

(5) Adequate accessible circulation space within the exhibition should be provided for persons with accessibility needs. Turning or reversing areas should be reserved where necessary. The minimum width of passage should meet standards for wheelchair turning and two-way traffic.

(6) The circulation route of exit within the exhibition should be reasonably planned so that visitors can either return to the accessible entrance or directly connect to the museum's barrier-free circulation routes.

2.3.2 Flooring and level difference

(1) Flooring materials should be slip-resistant and low-friction to facilitate wheelchair access. Highly reflective or slippery properties should be avoided.

(2) Flooring should be kept as flat as possible. Level differences, raised platforms, thresholds, or other features that hinder accessibility should be avoided. Where level changes are unavoidable, they should be connected by gentle accessible ramps.

(3) Flooring designs should avoid strong visual contrast or complex patterns that may cause false perceptions of level changes for persons with visual impairments. Areas where different materials are joined (e.g., artistic installations, decorative flooring) should have visual cues or flexible barriers set along the edges.

(4) Where carpets or carpet tiles are used, they should be securely fixed and level. Carpets should have low pile, and a solid underlay or no underlay should be used underneath to avoid increased access risks caused by loose or unstable materials.

2.3.3 Lighting environment and light source configuration

(1) Lighting design should balance collections conservation with accessibility needs.

(2) Soft, uniformly diffused lighting should be adopted to avoid insufficient light, strong backlighting, or localized glare.

(3) Where conservation conditions permit, the illuminance of exhibits should be no lower than 100 lux, while reflections and glare from display cases should be minimized.



- (4) For collections that cannot be displayed under intense light due to their fragility, photographs, illustrations, or replicas should be provided as accessible alternatives.
- (5) For exhibition items that use intense light or flickering light sources (e.g., immersive multimedia or interactive installations), clear warnings of sensory overload should be displayed at the exhibition entrance.

2.3.4 Acoustic environment and sound source configuration

- (1) Background noise in exhibition spaces should be effectively controlled, avoiding excessive amplification from audio equipment or excessive reverberation.
- (2) Background noise levels should preferably be kept below 45 dB. Where necessary, sound-absorbing materials may be applied to ceilings or walls to reduce sound reflection and auditory interference.
- (3) For exhibition items that include rhythmic or repetitive sounds (e.g., interactive audio effects or immersive sound installations), acoustically separated areas or designated sound zones should be provided. Clear warnings of sensory overload should be displayed at the exhibition entrance.

2.3.5 Exhibition design and facilities

2.3.5.1 Exhibition environment

- (1) Galleries must feature intuitive, circulating routes established through clear spatial structures and thematic narratives. These routes should be reinforced by repetitive design elements and supported by accessible labels, guidebooks, or multimedia guides.
- (2) Dedicated accessible seating and rest areas must be provided. In space-constrained environments, seating may be placed in adjacent corridors or neighboring galleries.
- (3) For wall-mounted or protruding objects (e.g., display cases, fire extinguishers), install cane-detectable barriers at floor level and apply protective edge guards to minimize collision risks.
- (4) In noise-sensitive environments, staff-led guidance may be offered to assist visitors, reducing the sound of white canes on hard flooring and preventing collisions in crowded spaces.



2.3.5.2 Furniture

- (1) Display cases and vitrines must be designed with heights and structures that accommodate persons with accessibility needs while remaining free of sharp edges or tipping hazards.
- (2) Furniture (e.g., display cases and plinths) should utilize non-reflective glazing and free of visual obstruction for all visitors.

2.3.5.3 Exhibits

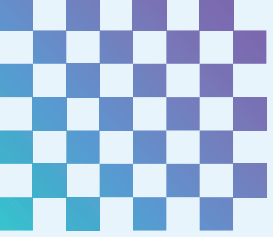
- (1) Exhibit layouts must prioritize unobstructed sightlines for all visitors.
- (2) Artifacts displayed on shelves or plinths should feature minimalist, high-contrast backgrounds and be positioned within a comfortable viewing range.
- (3) Wall-mounted works (e.g., particularly calligraphy and painting), must be installed at accessible heights and coordinated with non-wall-mounted works. The arrangement must integrate with floor-standing displays to ensure a clear, cane-detectable path that remains free of protruding hazards.

2.3.5.4 Labels

- (1) Exhibition spaces must provide labels in multiple accessible formats (e.g., Braille labels, audio-visual descriptions, and large-print versions).
- (2) Label design must prioritize readability by ensuring high color contrast, legible font sizes, and standardized mounting heights and locations.

2.3.6 Spatial allowance and emergency design

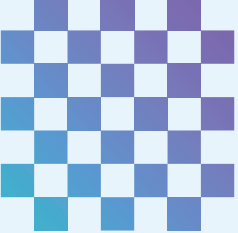
- (1) Temporary exhibitions must pre-allocate accessible circulation routes and viewing zones. Design should prioritize logistic efficiency by incorporating adjustable display structures and easily replaceable assistive materials.
- (2) The use of modular display systems, adjustable rail heights, and movable platforms is recommended to ensure exhibits can be reconfigured to meet diverse accessibility needs.
- (3) Floors in designated rest areas must be flush and level. Sufficient clearance must be reserved to provide dedicated wheelchair parking spaces alongside standard seating.
- (4) All exhibition spaces must feature clearly marked, accessible emergency evacuation routes equipped with both visual and audible signaling for all visitors.



3

Museum Communication for Accessibility







3. Museum Communication for Accessibility

Museum information accessibility is a crucial component in ensuring visitors with accessibility needs can equally, independently, and comprehensively obtain service information and understand exhibition content. This chapter outlines the principles and implementation of accessible information design, focusing on information access and exhibition interpretation. It aims to create a multi-modal, human-centered communication environment that ensures all visitors can access museum services with dignity, regardless of their abilities or technical conditions.

3.1 Information Accessibility

3.1.1 Accessible websites and mobile internet applications

Museum digital platforms must be perceivable, operable, and understandable, ensuring full compatibility with various assistive technologies. Websites and mobile applications should be developed to support multi-terminal adaptation, providing seamless remote access for all users.

3.1.1.1 Design principles

- (1) Perceivability: Content across all digital platforms, including websites/mobile websites, mobile apps, and mini programs) must be presented in formats that can be perceived through multiple sensory channels (visual, auditory, and tactile, etc.).
- (2) Operability: Interaction with information systems must be intuitive and support alternative multiple input methods. Users should be able to complete essential tasks, such as reservations and inquiries via voice commands, keyboard navigation, or touch assistance.
- (3) Understandability: Both the information content and the user interface must be clear and predictable, ensuring that navigation and operations are easily understood by visitors with diverse accessibility needs.
- (4) Compatibility: Systems must maintain robust interoperability with a wide range of assistive technologies and remain functional across various operating systems and platforms.



3.1.1.2 Published content

Museums must widely publish accessible information, including opening hours, location and transport options, ticketing policies, reservation services, visiting instructions, guide maps, and real-time status of accessible facilities. All data must be periodically verified for accuracy; if facilities are temporarily unavailable, clear alternative solutions must be provided.

A prominent “Accessibility Services” link should be placed on the website homepage, with a corresponding dedicated column in mobile apps and mini programs for streamlined access.

3.1.1.3 Accessible websites

(1) Page layout and navigation: A concise and clear grid layout structure should be adopted, and the page content should be divided into header navigation area, main content display area, sidebar auxiliary information area, bottom information area, etc. Floating windows or pop-up elements that disrupt navigation for screen-reader visitors should be avoided.

(2) Text and image accessibility: Webpage text must utilize legible sans-serif fonts. All non-text content, such as image and icons, must include descriptive alternative text (alt text) to ensure compatibility with operating system assistive tools and professional screen readers.

(3) Multimedia content accessibility: All audio and video content must be accompanied by accurate synchronized captions and text transcripts. Sign language interpretation overlays for video media is highly recommended.

3.1.1.4 Accessible mobile internet applications

(1) Universal interface design: In the development of museum mobile apps and mini programs, the interface design should follow the principle of universality and consider the common needs of visitors with accessibility needs.

(2) Accessibility function development: Accessibility must be integrated throughout the entire development lifecycle, from underlying code architecture to interaction logic, ensuring code-level optimization. Continuous iterative development is required to maintain compatibility with the latest operating systems and assistive technologies.

(3) Information push and feedback: Systems must provide real-time notifications and updates for exhibitions and schedules, ensuring visitors and caregivers stay informed.



Furthermore, integrated feedback loops, such as in-app surveys and live support, must be established to drive continuous, user-centric optimizations.

3.1.2 Intelligent guides, manuals, and maps

Utilizing multi-terminal intelligent guides, such as indoor positioning, facility navigation, and multimodal narrations, alongside diverse manual formats ensures all visitors can access information according to their specific needs.

3.1.2.1 Intelligent guide design

- (1) Carrier terminals: Carrier terminals should support a range of platforms, including mobile apps, mini programs, and dedicated handheld guide devices, allowing visitors with accessibility needs to choose on-demand. All visitors should be able to select the most suitable guide method based on their specific requirements and preferences.
- (2) Positioning services: Systems should integrate multiple positioning technologies such as RFID, Bluetooth, GPS, and Angle of Arrival (AOA). They should provide context-triggered audio descriptions based on real-time location data to minimize manual user input and reduce cognitive load during the tour. Based on the visitor's location, the system should automatically provide information about the proximity of essential services, including wheelchair rentals, accessible routes, rest areas, accessible restrooms, and service desks.
- (3) Accessibility functions: Audio and video resources must include synchronized captions and transcripts to ensure that visitors with sensory impairments can access content independently and in real-time. To further enhance navigation and engagement, these digital systems should utilize haptic vibration alerts for notifications, alongside recommended features such as sign language interpretation videos and AI-driven voice assistants for natural language Q&A. For spatial orientation, the platform should integrate augmented reality (AR) visual prompts – such as blinking icons on real-scene imagery – and intelligent route correction that provides dual-mode (voice and tactile) feedback if a visitor deviates from their accessible path.
- (4) Guide maps: Universal symbols for accessible facilities must be used at key nodes, such as accessible restrooms, wheelchair rental points, and emergency call devices. Enlarged and audio maps should be provided for visually impaired visitors.
- (5) Universal vision: High-contrast user interfaces and color-blind friendly color schemes must be adopted to ensure legibility, supported by a simplified design hierarchy



that reduces cognitive load. The interface should allow for dynamic font scaling and incorporate touch error-tolerant buttons, featuring enlarged hit areas and increased space, to accommodate users with visual impairments or limited fine motor control.

3.1.2.2 Guide manual design

(1) Multi-version services: Manuals must cater to diverse accessibility needs by providing large-print, Braille, and high-contrast graphic versions suitable for both tactile and visual reading. Simultaneous electronic versions should be provided to ensure compatibility with screen readers and mobile scanning, allowing visitors to access information in their preferred physical or digital format.

(2) Page layout and content: Pages must avoid information overload by maintain a clear hierarchy and concise content, supported by detailed catalogs and indexes for rapid navigation. Descriptive alt text should be provided for non-text elements such as pictures and icons.

(3) Visual design and typesetting: Text must utilize legible sans-serif fonts, avoiding decorative styles, with optimized character spacing to enhance readability; high-contrast color schemes should be applied to text and backgrounds, while critical information should be conveyed through redundant cues, combining color with text labels, patterns, and textures.

3.2 Exhibition Information Accessibility

3.2.1 Exhibition texts and design

Exhibition texts must be structured to accommodate the diverse cognitive and perceptual needs of all visitors, prioritizing clarity, readability, and inclusiveness.

3.2.1.1 Multi-level texts

(1) Definition: Multi-level texts should establish a clear hierarchical structure, ranging from titles and introductions to unit descriptions, exhibit labels, and extended information, to ensure content is accessible to visitors with varying reading abilities and sensory preferences of visitors with accessibility needs.

(2) Writing principles: Information between text levels should be progressive and complementary ensuring a logical flow from broad themes to granular details with unified,



consistent typesetting across all platforms. Alternative formats such as large-print versions, Braille, and audio guides should be provided to the specific context of the exhibition for visitors with accessibility needs.

3.2.1.2 Plain texts

Plain language texts should use clear, straightforward, and legible phrasing to ensure visitors can process information quickly and accurately.

(1) Writing principles:

Conciseness: Remove unnecessary complex sentence structures and excessive modifiers.

Clarity: Directly convey key information and avoid ambiguity by using literal, precise language.

Consistency: The expression format for similar information should be unified and consistent to reduce cognitive burden.

Inclusiveness: Consider differences in language and cognitive level.

(2) Specific suggestions:

Information structure: Use descriptive titles and short paragraphs, and auxiliary reading with serial numbers, bullet points, or subsections; add introductory sentences or prompts when necessary.

Plain language: Use common vocabulary, avoid long noun stacks, and provide brief, parenthetical explanations for technical terms. Sentences should be kept short and direct, eliminating complex nested clauses and redundant information to keep the reader focused on key facts.

Visual aids: Text-heavy descriptions should be replaced or supplemented with information visualization tools such as diagrams, tables, timelines, maps, or color blocks .

3.2.1.3 Text design

Text design directly impacts the reading experience and information acquisition efficiency of visitors with accessibility needs. It should combine elements such as fonts and font sizes, layout design, colors, installation heights, and lighting, to ensure clarity, beauty, coordinated atmosphere, and respect for different language habits.

(1) Fonts and font sizes: Select fonts with clear strokes and well-proportioned structures, featuring prominent titles and legible body text. Use sans-serif fonts such as SimHei for Chinese, Arial for English and numbers, and equivalent clean sans-serif fonts for other



languages. Font sizes must remain consistent across text levels and be adjusted based on viewing distance: the greater the distance, the larger the font must be to maintain readability.

(2) Layout design: Layout design should follow the a logical visual flow with clear hierarchy, ensuring that text maintains a direct spatial relationship with its corresponding exhibits or diagrams. In multilingual contexts, Chinese should be given priority, and other languages placed consistently below or beside it. Text line widths and spacing should be moderate, with paragraph spacing intentionally set wider than line spacing to create clear visual breaks.

(3) Colors: Color choices should harmonize with the exhibition theme while strictly prioritizing the lightness contrast between the text color and its background.

(4) Installation height: Considering the sight range of adults, children, and wheelchair users, wall texts should be installed between 1.2 and 1.6 meters from the ground. The center line of the text should be positioned at approximately 1.4 meters from the ground.

(5) Lighting: Fully consider the balance between cultural object protection and text visibility. Boost text area lighting, employ matte-finish display boards, and utilize low-reflectivity glass cabinets to prevent glare.

3.2.2 Multi-sensory display methods

Multi-sensory displays integrate tactile and auditory elements to create immersive, interactive, and inclusive experiences. By moving beyond vision-dominant formats, these displays improve the participation and understanding of exhibitions by persons with disabilities, older persons, children, and other visitors with accessibility needs.

3.2.2.1 Tactile design

(1) Installation height and position: Tactile exhibits and corresponding Braille instructions should be set at a reasonable height and position to ensure that visually impaired visitors, elders, children, and wheelchair users can engage with the displays without obstruction.

(2) Safety and identification design: Tactile exhibits should adopt rounded corner designs to avoid sharp edges and enhance identification through different textures (such as smooth and rough).

(3) Interactivity: Add interactive elements, such as knob or push rod devices with vibration feedback, to make the tactile experience more vivid and interesting.



3.2.2.2 Sound design

- (1) Sound layering and path guidance: Develop a multi-layer sound structure (such as exhibition hall ambient sound, exhibition area theme sound, and exhibit interactive sound) and guide the navigation through differences in volume, directionality, and timbre.
- (2) Sound prompts: Sound prompts (such as distinctive short sound effects or theme melodies) are to be set at key points to assist in perceiving spatial transitions.
- (3) Sound optimization: Various sounds should be kept at a moderate volume to avoid interfering with adjacent exhibits. For visitors with accessibility needs, provide differentiated hearing services, such as increasing or decreasing volume, and set obvious pause/skip buttons on interactive exhibits.

3.2.3 Multimedia accessibility

Provide multi-version services such as captions, sign language, and audio descriptions for audio and video content in exhibitions to ensure equitable access to multimedia information for visitors with accessibility needs.

3.2.3.1 Captions

- (1) Video captions: Videos should be matched with corresponding captions to ensure that the text is clear and easy to distinguish, and the font size is appropriate. The speed of caption changes should be moderate to facilitate reading by visitors with hearing impairments and seniors.
- (2) Intelligent real-time captions: AI can be used for real-time speech-to-text to quickly identify speech and generate captions.

3.2.3.2 Multi-version services and acquisition

- (1) Multi-version services: It is recommended to provide multi-version service options, such as captions, sign language interpretation, adjusting caption size, and adjusting the proportion of sign language screens.
- (2) Acquisition of multi-version service information: A map/ diagram should be set at the entrance of the exhibition to mark the locations where multi-version services are provided, and the same marking method should be used at the corresponding exhibits, display boards, etc. These markings must be clear, highly visible, and intuitive to ensure easy identification by all visitors.



3.2.3.3 Description of visual and audio information

(1) Description of visual information: For persons with visual impairments, it is recommended to provide a description of visual information such as exhibition videos and images. The description of visual information should follow the relevant standards and requirements of audio description to assist persons with visual impairment in constructing mental images. It is recommended to equip portable explanation devices containing visual information descriptions for rent, as well as non-mobile devices containing visual information descriptions such as fixed headphones and directional speakers in audio-visual areas and interactive areas.

(2) Audio description: For persons with hearing impairments, verbatim real-time captions should be provided for explanations, dialogues etc., in audio and video. For non-speech audio such as background music, descriptive captions should be used to convey the mood and rhythm. Tactile devices should be integrated into audio-visual areas and interactive areas to allow persons with hearing impairments to experience musical rhythm through vibration.

3.2.3.4 Video with sign language interpretation

Video must feature synchronous sign language interpretation. The proportion of sign language interpreters in the screen should be no less than 1/3. For split-screen or picture-in-picture, the main part of display should not be obscured. AI-driven “digital humans” can be introduced for sign language translation. It is critical to verify the linguistic accuracy of these automated avatars to ensure the message remains faithful to the original content.

3.2.4 Auxiliary display tools

To assist visitors in viewing and understanding content, exhibitions should provide auxiliary tools such as tactile maps, 3D-printed models, and magnifying glasses. These aids facilitate a deeper, hands-on connection for audiences with diverse sensory needs.

3.2.4.1 Production and application of touch maps

(1) Touch map design: Design tactile maps based on the specific content and characteristics of the exhibits. These maps should highlight key information and the structural outlines of objects, utilizing a variety of materials and textures to represent intricate details and distinguish different zones of the display.



(2) Explanation and assistance of touch maps: Position detailed explanatory texts, Braille, and audio descriptions alongside tactile maps to introduce the displayed content.

3.2.4.2 3D printed model display

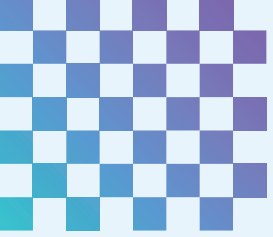
(1) Model selection and production: Select representative exhibits or exhibition elements for 3D data scanning, 3D modeling, and 3D printing production.

(2) Model display and interaction: Place 3D printed models in the exhibition space, and establish special interactive areas and signs.

3.2.4.3 Provision of magnifying glasses and other auxiliary tools

(1) Magnifying glass configuration: Magnifying glasses should be appropriately installed in areas displaying small exhibits and fine cultural object details.

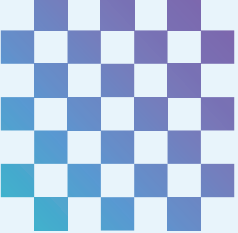
(2) Expansion of other auxiliary tools: To meet specific requirements, additional auxiliary display tools can be provided, such as small telescopes, microscopes, and color cards.



4

Museum Service for Accessibility







4. Museum Service for Accessibility

Museum service accessibility is the critical link that translates physical infrastructure and digital information into actual value for the visitor. This chapter outlines principles and standards for disability etiquette, learning support, and emergency response required to build a human-centered service mechanism. By integrating professional assistance throughout the visitor journey, museums can ensure that individuals with accessibility needs receive respectful, flexible, and effective support at every touchpoint.

4.1 Principles of Respectful Interaction

This section provides museum staff with essential etiquette, communication strategies, and behavioral guidelines for interacting with persons with disabilities. The core principle is person-centered service – prioritizing the dignity and autonomy of each individual while avoiding stereotypes or unwarranted assumptions. Staff should always engage with visitors in the manner they themselves prefer, ensuring that assistance is offered respectfully rather than imposed.

4.1.1 Prioritizing visitors and fostering respect

Treat all visitors with equal courtesy and respect. Focus on the individual rather than their disability.

Speak directly to the visitor, maintaining eye contact even if they are accompanied by a companion, interpreter, or caregiver.

Use “people-first” language that emphasizes the individual, e.g., “a child with autism” “a student with dyslexia” or “an older adult with cognitive changes”.

Avoid any behavior or language that could be perceived as mocking or disrespectful.

Avoid characterizing visitors with disabilities as “victims” or as “inspirational heroes”; recognize disability as a part of human diversity rather than a trait to be pitied or over-exalted.

Maintain the visitors’ privacy by avoiding unsolicited inquiries into the nature, cause, or medical details of their disability.

4.1.2 Inquire proactively, avoid assumptions

Always ask before offering help: “Would you like assistance?”



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Assist only when requested, and limit it to what is necessary and appropriate. Let the visitor retain control.

Follow the Observe → Ask → Listen → Assist sequence: observe a potential need → ask if help is needed → listen to the specific request → assist within your capacity.

If unsure how best to help, ask: “What would be most useful for you right now?”

If a visitor appears distressed, fatigued, or overwhelmed, gently ask whether they would like a quiet space or other support.

Respond promptly to questions and requests. If you are unable to fulfill a request due to policy or resource constraints, explain the situation honestly and offer an alternative or connect them with the appropriate department.

Maintain visitor privacy by refraining from making assumptions or speculations regarding an individual’s disability status. Recognize that many conditions – including mental health conditions, chronic illnesses, and sensory or cognitive disabilities – are non-apparent.

All requests for assistance should be respected with trust, upholding the visitor’s dignity without requiring medical proof or questioning the legitimacy of their needs.

Prioritize visitor independence by offering assistance only when it is requested, and regard all expressed needs as valid without skepticism or judgment.

Approach visitors at a steady, visible pace and initiate conversation in a calm, natural tone. To begin an interaction, offer a gentle greeting such as: “Hello, I’m [Name] from the museum. May I assist you with anything?” This ensures the visitor is comfortably aware of your presence before engagement begins.

4.1.3 Use standardized language^①

Use modern, respectful terminology such as “persons with disabilities” “deaf and hard of hearing persons” “persons with visual impairments”, and “persons with mobility impairments”.

Maintain appropriate social distance. For longer conversations with wheelchair users, sit or kneel to speak at eye level.

^① For further guidance, see UNESCO, *Disability Inclusive Language Guidelines, 2021*; China Disabled Persons’ Federation, *Notice on Appropriate Designations for Persons with Disabilities and Disability-Related Work in Publicity and Reporting, 2022*.



Provide information in clear, concise language. Avoid jargon or complex phrasing that may cause sensory or cognitive overload.

Regard mobility aids, white canes, hearing devices, and service dogs as personal extensions of the visitor.

Avoid using derogatory, outdated, or offensive terms such as “cripple” “deaf-mute” “blind man” “lame” or any slang referring to specific disabilities in a mocking or demeaning way.

Refrain from using comparative terms like “normal” or “healthy” to describe visitors without disabilities, as these imply that disability is a deviation or a deficiency.

Always request and receive verbal permission before touching a visitor, their mobility device, or their service animal – this includes patting shoulders, handling canes, leaning on wheelchairs, or petting/feeding their service animals.

4.1.4 Listen patiently, confirm promptly

Be patient and allow the visitor to set the pace of conversation.

Repeat or rephrase key information to ensure mutual understanding.

Have written communication tools ready (paper, pens, or digital tablets) for visitors who prefer visual or written interactions.

Demonstrate active listening by allowing visitors ample time to express themselves and make decisions independently. Maintain a respectful pause and refrain from interrupting or finishing a visitor’s sentences.

4.2 Accessible Services throughout the Entire Visitor Journey

This section outlines accessible service provisions across all stages – before, during, and after the museum visit. Through coordinated actions in information dissemination, route guidance, on-site support, and feedback mechanisms, museums can ensure that all visitors – including persons with disabilities, older persons, children, and others with accessibility needs – can navigate the museum independently and enjoy equitable, enriching cultural experiences.

4.2.1 Pre-visit

4.2.1.1 Transportation guidance

Museums should provide clear, detailed accessible transportation information to help



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visitors choose the most suitable travel options.

Specify subway lines, stations, exits, and accessibility features (e.g., “Exit B at Plaza Station, Metro Line 1, equipped with an elevator to street level”). Indicate walking directions and estimated duration from the exit to the museum entrance.

List accessible bus routes serving the museum, stop names (e.g., “Route 357, Plaza Station”), and walking time from the stop to the museum.

Provide driving directions to the museum, information about number and location of museum accessible parking spaces, elevator access from the parking facility to the museum entrance, and nearby accessible public parking.

Museums may arrange volunteers to assist persons with visual impairments arriving by taxi or on foot, meeting them at designated drop-off points.

4.2.1.2 Recommended routes

Museums should recommend tailored accessible itineraries based on visitors’ diverse needs, as well as collections and exhibitions.

Develop sensory maps indicating accessible restrooms, elevators, seating areas, lifts, nursing rooms, quiet rooms, and low-height service counters, as well as natural/artificial lighting areas, more/less crowded areas, noisy/quieter areas, warm/cold areas, and strong smells areas.

Offer routes with minimal stairs and elevator access for wheelchair users, older visitors, and families with infants or young children.

4.2.2 During the visit

4.2.2.1 Entrance reception

(1) Service objective

Help visitors feel safe and oriented upon arrival by proactively identifying and responding to their needs.

(2) Service measures

Basic: Museums should provide wheelchair and folding chair loans, stroller parking, low-height service counters, luggage storage. Physical infrastructure and signage should align with relevant sections of this guide.

Advanced: Provide communication support tools, including basic sign language reference



cards, multilingual real-time translation devices, hearing loop systems, accessible information desks, AI-powered reception systems, multilingual AI-enabled transparent displays, and personalized welcome protocols.

Service guidelines: Greet visitors warmly and ask: “How can I assist you?”. Briefly explain the museum layout and accessible facilities, offer equipment rental, help plan a route, and distribute guide devices. Direct visitors to accessible entrances or exhibition zones. Encourage use of on-site signage and digital resources.

4.2.2.2 Exhibition area guidance

(1) Service objective

Enable equal access to cultural content through multimodal, inclusive interpretation that supports independent engagement of all visitors.

(2) Service measures

Basic: Tactile models and 3D-printed replicas, Braille and large-print guides, easy-to-read materials, audio description, and emergency call buttons.

Advanced: Multilingual guides, sign language interpretation (live or video), Braille/large-print labels, noise-canceling headphones, sensory kits, sensory-friendly hours, hearing loop systems, AR/VR aids, and AI-powered real-time multilingual narration.

Service guidelines: Offer multisensory interpretation based on individual preferences (e.g., tactile, auditory, visual; see relevant sections). Keep pathways clear, ensure safety, and respect visitors’ pace. Foster an inclusive, immersive atmosphere that honors autonomy.

4.2.2.3 Activity support

(1) Service objective

Create an inclusive learning environment that accommodates diverse learning styles and encourages self-directed exploration.

(2) Service measures

Basic: Height-adjustable furniture, tactile models and 3D-printed replicas, multimedia aids, quiet zones, and soft lighting.

Advanced: Hearing loops, sensory kits, noise-reducing booths, voice-controlled interfaces, tactile control panels, smart interactive stations, and personalized learning pathways.

Service guidelines: Ensure environmental conditions meet recommended standards (see relevant sections). Use visual schedules to explain activity flow. Provide step-by-step



demonstrations, confirm understanding, offer multisensory tools, and encourage varied forms of participation with positive reinforcement.

4.2.2.4 Rest facilities

(1) Service objective

Offer safe, comfortable, and private spaces for physiological and psychological respite.

(2) Service measures

Basic: Accessible restrooms, nursing rooms (with changing tables), non-slip flooring, tactile guidance paths, and designated rest areas for service dogs.

Advanced: Sensory-friendly lounges, priority access signage for visitors with non-visible disabilities, quiet zones, voice navigation, and smart climate control.

Service guidelines: Maintain cleanliness and quiet. Proactively guide visitors to appropriate facilities, briefly explain how to use them, and offer safety tips. Respect privacy and avoid unnecessary attention.

4.2.2.5 Food and beverage services

(1) Service objective

Ensure seamless ordering, meal collection, and payment, with transparent information and a comfortable dining experience.

(2) Service measures

Basic: Wheelchair-accessible tables, picture menus, adaptive utensils, and children's tableware.

Advanced: Braille and large-print menus, allergen labeling, multiple payment options, smart ordering kiosks, and accessible pickup counters.

Service guidelines: Ensure clear circulation in dining areas and assist with seating. Clearly present menu items and highlight allergens. Support diverse ordering methods (pointing, writing, digital). Assist with meal collection when needed, and caution about hot food, bones, or sharp edges.

4.2.2.6 Shopping services

(1) Service objective

Enable all visitors to browse and purchase independently in a relaxed environment.



(2) Service measures

Basic: Low-height displays, mobile racks, large-font price tags, and illustrated, well-categorized product catalogs.

Advanced: Visual shopping guides, multilingual assistance, and multiple payment options.

Service guidelines: Design displays and pathways for easy navigation and reach. Clearly present product details, allow tactile exploration where appropriate. Offer personalized recommendations, and assist with packaging and payment.

4.2.2.7 Departure assistance

(1) Service objective

Support visitors in concluding their visit safely and satisfactorily.

(2) Service measures

Basic: Accessible exit routes, luggage retrieval, and clear transport guidance.

Advanced: Multilingual departure guidance, pre-booked transport information, and smart wayfinding tools.

Service guidelines: Ask: “Do you need help with directions?”. Remind visitors to collect belongings. Invite feedback, express gratitude, and warmly welcome future visits.

4.2.3 After the visit

4.2.3.1 Feedback collection

Establish multiple feedback channels – comment books, email, online surveys – to gather visitor insights while strictly safeguarding personal data and privacy.

Regularly engage persons with disabilities, elders, and representative organizations (e.g., Disabled Persons’ Federations, Aging Associations) through focus groups or accessibility experience reviews to obtain ongoing, in-depth feedback.

4.2.3.2 Continuous improvement

To ensure evidence-based and effective accessibility practices, museums should regularly conduct research and evaluation, review national and international standards, guidelines, and best practices in the cultural and accessibility sectors.

Based on visitor feedback and evaluation findings, develop clear improvement plans with defined objectives, responsibilities, timelines, and budgets. Establish a continuous



improvement cycle to progressively enhance the museum's accessibility infrastructure and services.

4.3 Inclusive Education and Learning Support in Museums

Museums should leverage their unique resources and apply the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to offer diverse learning supports, enabling all visitors – including persons with disabilities, elders, children, and others – to independently choose how they wish to engage. This section provides tiered implementation guidance tailored to institutional capacity, advocating an evolution beyond mere “physical access” toward “cognitive access, emotional belonging, and meaningful learning choices”, positioning museums as genuine lifelong learning spaces for all.

4.3.1 Foundational public education programs

Museums are encouraged to partner with local Disabled Persons' Federations, special education schools, volunteer organizations, and community groups to implement the following inclusive initiatives.

4.3.1.1 Inclusive themed events on key dates

Organize public awareness and participatory programs around international and national observances – such as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, China's National Day of Assisting Persons with Disabilities, International Museum Day, Spring Festival, and National Day – to raise public awareness and foster mutual understanding.

4.3.1.2 Basic inclusive education support

Offer advance reservation services for group visits from special education schools and rehabilitation centers. During guided tours, provide foundational supports including sign language interpretation, audio description, large-print and easy-to-read materials. Clearly display accessible service signage and contact information within exhibition spaces.

4.3.1.3 Diverse learning experiences

Offer at least one or two dedicated programs annually for specific audiences, such as tactile experiences with replicas of artifacts, sign language-led exhibition tours, audio-described guided visits, easy-to-read guides and manuals.



4.3.2 Advanced extension initiatives

Museums receiving over 100,000 annual visitors or employing dedicated education staff are encouraged to pilot the following projects, starting with select exhibitions.

4.3.2.1 Sensory-friendly hours

Designate sensory-friendly hours before/after regular opening or on specific days, featuring a low-stimulation environment: dim or disable flickering lights and bright screens, temporarily suspend high-noise interactive installations, reduce sudden sounds or visual effects, use softer or diffused lighting.

Establish quiet routes and quiet rooms in signage and digital guides. Equip these spaces with noise-canceling headphones, sensory kits, and other supports. Offer dedicated time slots for groups of persons with disabilities and their caregivers via advance booking.

4.3.2.2 Differentiated and personalized learning

Differentiated instruction (group level): within the same themed activity, offer multiple modes of engagement – e.g., visual displays, spoken narration, and tactile exploration – allowing participants to self-select based on preference or needs.

Personalized support (individual level): for visitors who declare specific accessibility requirements, develop individualized support plans, such as arranging sign language interpreters, providing audio description, offering companion assistance, or reserving quiet spaces.

4.3.2.3 Accessible digital learning resources

Establish an online education resource bank to provide accessible learning packages in multiple downloadable formats, supporting both preview and post-class extension. Develop interactive digital learning modules and produce age-appropriate, accessible video courses to enrich the content and formats of museum education.

4.3.3 Innovative and forward-looking practices

National, provincial, and major city museums are encouraged to lead innovation through public funding, cross-sector partnerships, and philanthropy.



4.3.3.1 Inclusive curriculum development

Collaborate with special education schools, inclusive mainstream schools, and rehabilitation centers to co-develop UDL-aligned museum curricula.

Design whole-class inclusive activities that enable students with diverse learning profiles to participate together. Provide teacher training to strengthen joint capacity in inclusive and differentiated instruction.

4.3.3.2 Inclusive digital platforms

Build an inclusive digital education platform that integrates multi-modal resources such as sign language interpretation, audio description, and easy-to-read materials. Utilize an intelligent recommendation system to provide personalized learning pathways, promoting resource sharing and equitable access to education.

4.3.3.3 Career pathways for diverse talent

Offer skills training programs in museum interpretation, sign language interpretation, and artifact conservation. Engage persons with disabilities as accessibility advisors or trainers to improve services from the audience's perspective. Provide internship opportunities and establish employment referral partnerships with businesses and social enterprises.

4.4 Accessible Emergency Response Capacity Building

This section addresses emergency management, contingency planning, facilities, and response procedures, aiming to strengthen museums' capacity to deliver accessible emergency response during natural hazards, accidents and disasters, public health emergencies, and public order incidents – thereby effectively safeguarding the lives and safety of visitors with accessibility needs.

4.4.1 Emergency management

Museums shall establish an emergency response group, clearly defining the accessibility-related responsibilities of each role during emergencies. In an emergency, this group shall activate as the emergency command center.

Accessible emergency needs must be integrated into all phases: prevention and preparedness, monitoring and early warning, response and rescue, and post-incident review and recovery.



Museums shall establish formal coordination mechanisms with local fire services, emergency medical services, and other professional responders to ensure inclusive emergency support.

4.4.2 Emergency response plans

Museums shall incorporate accessible emergency provisions into their overall emergency response plans. A dedicated accessible emergency response plan may be developed. Emergency response plans must include consultation with persons with disabilities and other at-risk groups. Plans shall specify: tailored early warning methods (e.g., visual, vibratory, auditory), clear evacuation procedures and accessible routes, allocation of specialized equipment, communication protocols (e.g., sign language, plain language). Museums shall conduct at least one full-scale drill and one specialized accessible emergency drill annually. Emergency response plans shall be regularly reviewed and updated based on evaluation findings.

4.4.3 Emergency response facilities

Museums shall provide specialized emergency equipment tailored to diverse needs, including but not limited to: visual alerts and flashing alarm systems for deaf and hard of hearing persons, tactile guidance paths and voice-enabled announcement systems for persons with visual impairments, accessible lift and stretcher for persons with mobility impairments. All facilities should be equipped with clear instructions specifying the conditions for their use and operating procedures, ensuring they are readily accessible and effectively usable in an emergency.

Emergency call stations shall be installed in key areas (e.g., entrances, corridors, galleries, restrooms), ideally equipped with automatic location tracking and video communication capabilities. First aid kits shall include commonly used items in the Chinese context – such as Suxiao Jiuxin Wan (Fast-Acting Heart-Saving Pills), and Huoxiang Zhengqi oral liquid (for gastrointestinal discomfort and heatstroke) – as well as salbutamol inhalers, thermometers and blood pressure monitors, disinfectants, hemostatic dressings, splints, personal protective equipment (PPE), automated external defibrillators (AEDs).

All facilities shall be inspected and maintained regularly, with records kept to ensure operational readiness. Museums should consider integrating a one-touch emergency assistance feature into their mobile applications.



4.4.4 Emergency response procedures

During emergencies, museums shall uphold the principle that the safety of human life is the highest priority, giving priority to the evacuation and rescue of persons with disabilities, older persons, children, and others with heightened vulnerability.

Response operations shall be rapid, coordinated, and effective, aiming to stabilize the situation as quickly as possible and minimize harm.

Museums shall establish standardized accessible emergency procedures, including dissemination of accessible early warnings, real-time visitor location identification, guided evacuation via accessible routes, and coordination with external emergency services.

Dedicated accessible evacuation support roles may be assigned, equipped with sign language interpreters, audio prompts, or vibratory alert devices.

A post-incident review shall be conducted to evaluate response effectiveness, refine procedures, and maintain comprehensive records for continuous improvement.

4.5 Inclusive Accessibility Support System Building

This section provides a foundational framework and key implementation strategies for museums to develop a sustainable accessibility support system. By strengthening staffing, institutional processes, professional capacity, and cross-sector collaboration, museums can meaningfully embed accessibility as a core institutional value.

4.5.1 Staffing and interdepartmental coordination

Museums should define a clear organizational structure and role-based responsibilities for accessibility, aligned with their size, resources, and strategic vision. Large and medium-sized museums should appoint a dedicated Accessibility Officer (or equivalent role) responsible for coordinating planning, interdepartmental collaboration, monitoring, evaluation, and external partnerships. Small museums should designate a staff member to oversee accessibility as part of their duties. Accessibility service standards must be integrated into the job descriptions of all relevant departments, and formal cross-departmental coordination mechanisms should be established.

Museums should actively recruit persons with disabilities, empowering them as co-creators – not just beneficiaries – of inclusive museum environments, leveraging their expertise and lived experience.



4.5.2 Volunteer engagement and incentives

Develop a diverse and well-managed volunteer program, structured into: general volunteers, providing wayfinding, activity support, and emergency assistance; specialized volunteers, offering expertise in sign language interpretation, special education, psychological first aid, or rehabilitation support.

Establish robust support and recognition mechanisms – including transportation allowances, meals, rest areas, training, and formal commendations – to enhance volunteer retention and sense of belonging.

4.5.3 Organization-wide accessibility training and evaluation

All staff must receive foundational accessibility training covering: core principles of inclusion, relevant national and international laws (e.g., UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), disability etiquette, use of accessible facilities, and emergency response procedures. Role-specific training should be delivered through workshops, scenario simulations, case studies, or e-learning. Accessibility must be included in onboarding programs. All staff should undergo annual refresher training and competency assessment. Persons with disabilities should be invited to serve as evaluators in this process.

Link training outcomes to professional development – e.g., by counting toward continuing education credits – and consider performance in accessibility as a factor in promotions or merit reviews.

4.5.4 Structured participation of disability communities

Establish institutionalized, ongoing mechanisms for engagement with disability communities, such as:

Developing partnerships with local Disabled Persons' Federations (DPFs) and disability-led organizations to establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee comprising persons with disabilities, subject-matter experts, and museum staff, and to inform strategic decisions; Before launching or renovating any accessibility initiative, soliciting input via surveys, interviews, or focus groups, and involve persons with disabilities in design, acceptance testing, and impact evaluation;

Inviting persons with disabilities to serve as trainers, guest speakers, or content co-developers for digital resources, educational materials, and public programs from multiple disability perspectives.

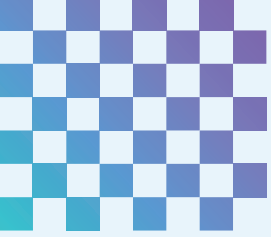


4.5.5 Resource integration and collaborative innovation

Pursue cross-sector partnerships to leverage external expertise and resources, including:
Collaborating with special education schools, rehabilitation centers, and technology firms to co-develop accessible products and services;

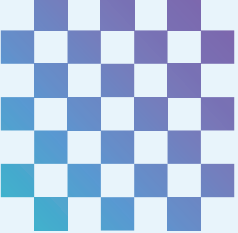
Partnering with universities to apply multidisciplinary research (e.g., from design, education, neuroscience) to museum practice;

Participating in national and international forums to share experiences, innovations, and policy insights – thereby contributing to global knowledge on inclusive museology.



Appendix







Appendix A: Accessibility Glossary

I.General Accessibility Terms

Accessibility
Accessible environment
Accessible facilities
Accessibility services
Accessibility signage
Accessible parking
Assistive technology
Barrier-free
Barrier-free design/ Accessibility design
Equal access
Equal cultural participation
Inclusive design
Information accessibility
Physical accessibility
Reasonable accommodation
Social inclusion
Universal design

II.Accessibility Hardware Facilities and Services

Accessible elevator/lift
Accessible Emergency Evacuation Route
Accessible entrance
Accessible exit
Accessible ramp
Accessible restroom
Accessible seating
Low counter service desk
Platform lift
Ramp
Tactile guide pathway



Tactile paths
Tactile paving
Wheelchair access
Wheelchair-accessible facility
Wheelchair rental service

III. Accessible Information and Services

Accessible mobile application
Accessible website
Adjustable lighting
Audio guide
Augmented Reality (AR) guide
Captioning services
Digital accessibility guide
Digital sign language guide
First aid room
Multilingual support
Multisensory exhibits
Nursing room
Quiet hours
Quiet room
Screen reader compatibility
Sensory backpack/bag
Sensory-friendly exhibition
Sensory map
Sensory room
Social narrative
Tactile model
Visual story
Virtual tour

IV. Accessibility for Specific Groups

Blind persons / Individuals with blindness



Caregiver / Companion / Attendant
Deaf persons / Individuals who are deaf
Neurodiversity
Neurodivergent individuals/visitors
Neurotypical
Persons/Individuals with visual impairment, including blind and low vision individuals
Persons/Individuals with hearing impairment, including deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals
Persons/Individuals with cognitive disabilities
Persons/Individuals with autism or autistic persons
Persons/Individuals with mobility impairment
Persons/Individuals with psychosocial or mental health disabilities
Persons with temporary mobility limitations
Seniors/Senior visitors
Unapparent disabilities / Hidden disabilities / Invisible disabilities

Visual support–related services and facilities

Alternative text
Audio description
Audio guide
Braille
Braille guidebook
Braille information panel
Braille signage
Color contrast
Guide dog friendly
High contrast display
Large print material
Persons/Individuals with color blindness
Screen reader compatible
Screen reader compatibility
Speech recognition
Speech-to-text
Tactile exhibits



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Tactile experience area

Tactile map

Text-based description

Auditory support–related services and facilities

Assistive listening device

Captioning services

Captioned video guide

Hearing loop system

Real-time captioning (CART)

Remote sign language interpretation

Sign language interpretation

Sign language video guide

Sign language guide

Visual alert system

Cognitive support–related services and facilities

Easy-to-read material

Plain language

Picture-supported explanation

V. Accessibility Partnerships & Advocacy

Accessibility advocacy

Accessibility training

Cross-agency collaboration






Disabled Persons' Federation

Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)

Promotion of accessibility culture









Appendix B: Accessibility Facility Symbols







No.	Graphic Symbol	Meaning	Description
01		Accessible Facility	Indicates a facility intended for use by persons with disabilities, older persons, the sick or injured, and other individuals with accessibility needs.
02		Accessible Passage	Indicates a horizontal passageway for use by persons with mobility impairments, including persons with disabilities, older persons, and the sick or injured.
03		Accessible Ramp	Indicates a ramp for use by persons with mobility impairments, including persons with disabilities, older persons, and the sick or injured.
04		Accessible Elevator	Indicates an elevator for use by persons with mobility impairments, including persons with disabilities, older persons, and the sick or injured.
05		Accessible Elevator-Platform	Indicates a platform lift for use by persons with mobility impairments who use wheelchairs, including persons with disabilities, older persons, and the sick or injured.



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06		Accessible Service Desk	Indicates a low counter service desk for use by persons with mobility impairments who use wheelchairs, including persons with disabilities, older persons, and the sick or injured.
07		Accessible Parking Space	Indicates a parking space for use by persons with mobility impairments, including persons with disabilities, older persons, and the sick or injured.
08		Accessible Restroom	Indicates a restroom for use by persons with mobility impairments, including persons with disabilities, older persons, and the sick or injured.
09		Text Telephone	Indicates a telephone that provides text assistance for persons with hearing or speech impairments.
10		Vision Impaired	Indicates equipment or devices intended for use by persons with visual impairments.
11		Hearing Impaired	Indicates facilities intended for use by persons with hearing impairments.








12		Telephone for the Hearing Impaired	Indicates a telephone intended for use by persons with hearing impairments.
13		Hearing Loop System	Indicates a hearing loop system (induction loop) for use by persons with hearing impairments.
14		Service Dog	Indicates a facility that accommodates service dogs (e.g., guide dogs, hearing dogs, assistance dogs) accompanying persons with disabilities.
15		Blind Persons	Indicates a facility intended for use by blind persons or individuals with visual impairments.
16		Limited Walking Capability	Indicates a facility intended for use by individuals with walking difficulties or who use mobility aids.
17		Priority Access for the Seniors	Indicates priority service or access for older persons.





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18		Priority Access for the Injured	Indicates priority service or access for the injured.
19		Priority Access for Expecting Mothers	Indicates priority service or access for pregnant women.
20		Priority Access for Persons with Babies	Indicates priority service or access for persons accompanied by infants or young children.
21		Priority Access for Persons with Internal Medical Conditions	Indicates priority service or access for persons with internal medical devices or conditions.
22		Audio Description	Indicates the provision of live commentary or narration (via headphones and a small transmitter) of visual elements for blind or low vision persons.
23		Volume Control Telephone	Indicates a telephone that has handsets with amplified sound and/or adjustable volume controls for persons with hearing impairments.



24		Assistive Listening Systems	Indicates assistive listening systems for persons with hearing impairments, which transmit amplified sound via hearing aids, headsets or other devices.
25		Sign Language Interpretation	Indicates the provision of sign language interpretation for persons with hearing impairments.
26		Accessible Print	Indicates the provision of large print materials (18 point or larger) for visually impaired persons, using sans serif or modified serif print with high contrast, with appropriate letter and word spacing.
27		Information Symbol	Indicates the location for specific information or materials concerning access.
28		Closed Captioning	Indicates captions stored as a separate track that can be freely turned on or off by the user (for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, transcribing speech and other relevant sounds as the audio or video plays).



29		Opened Captioning	Indicates captions that are embedded directly into the video image and cannot be turned off (in a museum context, audio or video sound may be kept at a minimum level, suitable for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, and people whose second language is English).
30		Braille Symbol	Indicates that printed material is available in Braille.

Note: Symbols No. 1–21 in this appendix are based on **GB/T 10001.9–2021**, *Public information graphical symbols – Part 9: Symbols for accessible facilities*. Symbols No. 22–30 are adapted from the **Disability Access Symbols**, developed by the **Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)**.



Normative References

Laws and Regulations of the People's Republic of China

Law of the People's Republic of China on Building Accessible Environments

Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of Disabled Persons

Law of the People's Republic of China on Public Cultural Service Guarantee

Law of the People's Republic of China on Cultural Relics Protection

Regulations on Museums

Policy Documents of the State Council and Related Departments

Guiding Opinions of the State Council on Further Strengthening the Work of Cultural Heritage

Several Opinions on Further Reform in Protection and Utilization of Cultural Relics

Opinions on Accelerating the Building of a Modernized Public Cultural Service System

Implementation Opinions of the General Office of the State Council on Further Strengthening the Safety of Cultural Relics

Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Reform and Development of Museums, jointly issued by the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee, National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Civil Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and National Cultural Heritage Administration

Measures for the Administration of Museums

International Conventions, Standards, and Guidelines

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)

Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All (UNESCO)

ICOM Statutes (International Council of Museums)

ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums (International Council of Museums)

