

museum

National Museum of Ireland

Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann

Exhibition Policy

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NMI Exhibitions Policy

The National Museum of Ireland (NMI) supports an active programme of innovative and engaging exhibitions. This Policy relates to any museum heritage objects on display at NMI premises, and tangible exhibitions defined as *‘the display of objects in space, accompanied by interpretative materials, and organised in such a fashion as to facilitate engagement with the public’*. This Policy also relates to digital exhibitions that may be online or presented in physical venues. Objects that have been loaned out to exhibitions that are not on NMI premises are covered in the **NMI Loans Policy**

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the **NMI Access Policy** and **NMI Learning Policy**. Specific approaches to the exhibition of human corporeal remains are covered in the **NMI Human Remains Policy**.

Legislative Basis

The National Cultural Institutions Act 1997, Section 11 (2) states that the principal functions of the Board of NMI include:

(b) to arrange or provide for the display of museum heritage objects in the collection of the Museum,

(c) to organise or arrange for the organisation of temporary exhibitions (within or outside the State) of museum heritage objects from the collection of the Museum

Policy

- 1 NMI will create long-term exhibitions at its various sites as the prime means by which the museum communicates with its visitors, and by which it makes accessible the museum heritage objects in its care
 - a. Long-term exhibitions will provide an overview of the core subject areas of the NMI and be directly relevant to the collections
 - b. Long-term exhibitions will be subject to review every 5 years.
- 2 NMI will create temporary exhibitions of two main types:
 - a. Those that the NMI develops itself, either alone or in collaboration with others.
 - b. Exhibitions on loan in to the NMI that are developed by other organisations and which are relevant to the NMI.
- 3 NMI will create digital exhibitions, for hosting online, or within museum spaces or other venues.
- 4 Exhibitions at the NMI should enlighten, challenge and be enjoyed by visitors to the Museums. In striving to meet these goals, intellectual rigour and transparency shall underpin the exhibitions development process. The following standards will apply to all exhibitions that are mounted in the NMI:

- a. NMI will ensure that exhibitions are accessible and audience-centred: the needs, interests, expectations and motivations of audiences will inform the planning, design, evaluation, and where appropriate, research and delivery of exhibitions.
 - b. All exhibitions will be created in such a way as to comply with the Access Policy of NMI.
 - c. All new exhibitions produced by the NMI will conform to the NMI's Irish Language Policy. Incoming exhibitions are not subject to this requirement, although it will be encouraged.
 - d. Online exhibitions and products relating to physical exhibitions may be generated in multiple languages.
 - e. All new exhibitions in the NMI will conform to Collection Care and Conservation Policy and employ conservation approved/grade materials in their construction
 - f. NMI will undertake due diligence with regard to intellectual property and copyright ownership of any materials used in exhibitions.
 - g. Each Exhibition will have a set of clearly defined Objectives and Key Performance indicators and all exhibitions will be subject to an appropriate evaluation process.
 - h. Content of exhibitions will be supported by research involving NMI staff and be subject to internal review as part of the exhibition development process.
- 5 A rolling programme of temporary exhibitions will be scheduled on a 5-year cycle, linked to the NMI's business planning and strategic planning cycles.
- a. The purpose of temporary exhibitions will be, in the main, to explore themes that are relevant to and enlarge upon the core subject areas and collections of the NMI.
 - b. The NMI may, where appropriate, mount exhibitions or displays of objects on topics beyond the core subject areas of the Museum. Such exhibitions should resonate with the heritage and peoples of Ireland.
 - c. Anyone, internal or external, can propose a temporary exhibition for the NMI using the standard exhibition proposal mechanism.
 - d. Incoming temporary exhibitions must meet, or be capable of meeting, the standards of NMI's own exhibitions.
 - e. All exhibitions will have a presence on the NMI website and social media platforms.
 - f. The NMI may make its temporary exhibitions available for loan, to suitable venues both in Ireland and overseas.
 - g. In developing and designing temporary exhibitions, NMI will be mindful of their potential to travel to other suitable venues in Ireland and overseas.
 - h. The NMI expects the costs relating to exhibition loans and travelling exhibitions to be covered by the borrower (see Loans Policy). We reserve the right to charge for travelling exhibitions.
- 6 In line with the National Cultural Institutions Act 1997 (Sections 14 (2) d and 14 (8)), long-term exhibitions will be free of charge to enter, but NMI reserves the right to charge for entry to temporary exhibitions should it be deemed appropriate by the Board.