



Museums in a Pandemic: Snapshot of Impacts in Spring 2021

May 28, 2021

We have been studying the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the children's museum field. Since May 2020, we have conducted multiple surveys of ACM member institutions. Eighty-nine museums participated in the most recent survey that took place from April 7 to May 11, 2021. Below are several initial findings from the survey:

- Funding** – Out of 89 museums that responded to the survey, 85 applied for financial support from a federal or local government agency. Those attempts were very successful, with roughly 80% receiving funds. The median amount received from all federal, and local government sources was \$394,250. Sixty museums appealed to private funders, including corporate entities, foundations, and individual donors. Fifty-nine museums succeeded with their requests. The median amount of total private funding was \$105,000.
- Financial Reserves** – Seventy-three museums reported how long their unrestricted cash reserves could support the institution. The average length of time was about 10 months.
- Opening to In-Person Visits** – For the 12 months leading up to the beginning of the pandemic, museums reported an average of 326 days of being open to visitors. From March 2020 to March 2021, museums were only open an average of 113 days to visitors. Based on previous reporting, nearly all museums offered virtual programming and services. For March 2021, data from 60 museums showed that indoor capacity is 35% of typical fire code capacity. Fifty-two institutions provided monthly data on in-person attendance, showing that average attendance was 27% of pre-pandemic monthly rates.
- Museum Workers** – Sixty-six museums reported on staff reductions and reduced hours at the time of the survey. These museums estimated 47% of full-time staff have been furloughed, laid-off, or had reduced hours. Sixty-seven museums reported an estimated 76% of part-time staff have been furloughed, laid-off, or had reduced hours.

ACM TRENDS

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