MUSEUMS *for* ALL ®

an initiative of the
Institute of Museum and Library Services

About Museums for All

Museums for All is a national access program that encourages museums in communities across the United States to actively reach out to low-income visitors.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the primary source of federal support for museums and libraries, and the Association of Children's Museums (ACM), an international children's museum service organization, are partners in this nationwide initiative to increase museum access.

How does Museums for All work?

Participating museums provide reduced admission, ranging from free to $3.00, to visitors presenting their SNAP EBT (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Electronic Benefit Transfer) card. This reduced rate is available during all normal operating hours to up to four individuals per EBT card.

Participating museums may choose to provide additional benefits, such as offering discounted rates to special exhibitions or discounted memberships, or accepting other means of identification, such as WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) EBT cards.

To evaluate reach, ACM and IMLS gather quarterly participation data from Museums for All institutions.

How do people benefit from Museums for All?

The cost of museum admission can be a barrier for many low-income families. With a year-round, open door policy, Museums for All invites low-income visitors to feel welcome at cultural institutions.

With Museums for All, visitors don't have to wait for special times to visit the museum. Instead, they have the opportunity to visit at times convenient to them, like every other visitor. Visitors can see that they are a valued part of the community, and museums are eager to welcome them.

What can you do?

We're asking you to help spread the word about Museums for All to low-income families. The work your agency does with this demographic can help museums find creative ways to connect to low-income populations where they already are. For instance, local service centers could display Museums for All materials and share details of the program with the families they serve.

participants

Museums for All participants include art museums, science centers, children's museums, historical societies, botanical gardens, planetariums, zoos, and more.

reach

Museums for All has reached more than 4 million visitors since its start.

impact

IMLS research shows that children who visited a museum during kindergarten performed better in reading, math, and science than children who did not. However, only 43% of kindergarteners of the lowest economic status visited museums.