

# **Office of State Museum**

**Agency Number 06-263**

**Program: Museum**

**Fiscal Year 2023-2024 through 2027-2028**

## **Agency Vision Statement**

The Office of State Museum will operate and manage the State of Louisiana's preeminent historical, cultural and educational institutions dedicated to collecting, preserving and interpreting artifacts, documents and art that reflect the diverse history, art, and culture of the State of Louisiana.

## **Agency/Program Mission Statement**

To maintain the Louisiana State Museum as a true statewide Museum system that is accredited by the American Association of Museums; to collect, preserve, and interpret buildings, documents and artifacts that reveal Louisiana's history and culture; and to present those items using both traditional and innovative technology to educate, enlighten and provide enjoyment for the people of Louisiana and its visitors.

## **Agency Philosophy Statement**

The history and culture of Louisiana are among the richest and most interesting in the world. The philosophy of the Office of State Museum is to use the highest standards of professionalism, scholarship, and management techniques, in accordance with the guidelines of the American Association of Museums, to operate the Louisiana State Museum system.

## **Agency Goals**

- I. To collect, preserve, and interpret buildings, artifacts, documents and other items that reveal Louisiana's history and culture; and to demonstrate and elucidate their broader meaning and relevance.
- II. To continuously review collections and deaccessions by focusing on the quality, not the quantity of acquisitions and to ensure that the Louisiana State Museum collection relates to our history and/or culture.
- III. To educate, enlighten and provide enjoyment for the people of Louisiana, visitors and others through the development of exhibition, programs and presentations of Louisiana's history, art, culture and people; and
- IV. To provide these services in accordance with the highest standards of professionalism, scholarship, and management, as described by the American Alliance of Museums.

**PROGRAM OBJECTIVE:**

**Objective 1:** Increase the number of attendees at museum functions, exhibits and educational programs by 25% by the year 2028.

**Program Activity:** Louisiana State Museum – Vieux Carre  
Louisiana State Museum – Baton Rouge  
Louisiana State Museum – Regional Initiatives

**State Outcome Goal:** Economic Development, Education

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**Strategies:**

- 1.1** Review outside analysis of the Museum's governance structure, as well as the relationship and agreements with its various support groups.
- 1.2** Continue the practices of utilizing contract curators to create exhibitions; bring in travelling exhibitions; increase rotation of collection items from storage into temporary exhibitions.
- 1.3** Evaluate museum offices to create increased exhibition/gallery space in the Museum properties
- 1.4** Strengthen existing community relationships through continued partnerships for exhibitions and educational and outreach programs
- 1.5** Create new relationships within the communities we serve in order to provide access to Museum resources and to continually broaden and expand the audiences we serve
- 1.6** Expand the use of social media and other technologies to engage with audiences and communities within Louisiana as well as globally.
- 1.7** Continue to grow our support of the children of Louisiana through the Museum school/education programs. Develop programs which link Museum content with K-12 curriculum
- 1.8** Provide additional traveling exhibits throughout the state within the State Library system and other venues
- 1.9** Establish new and strengthen existing Museum support groups in Baton Rouge, Natchitoches, Patterson, Thibodaux and New Orleans. Leverage volunteer opportunities at the Museum through the various support groups. Work with retirement communities and Retirement Commission to develop volunteer opportunities and programs for retirees
- 1.10** Work with tourism and other departments of DCRT to identify and highlight areas of the I-10 corridor as a cultural/museum by-way
- 1.11** Continue to apply for federal and corporate grants to support public programming, exhibitions and artifact conservation. Expand educational offerings to include international relationships and to focus on eco-cultural study
- 1.12** Continue renovations and restorations to preserve our most notable artifacts: our buildings.

**Indicators:**

Output	Number of community groups and partners formed Number of exhibitions Number of programs Analysis of media coverage of Museum exhibitions and programs Private funding received Number of audience (paid attendance, school groups, virtual) Number of Traveling Exhibits
Outcomes	Increase in Traveling exhibits (parishes)
Quality	AAM Accreditation

## **Office of State Museum Program Supporting Documentation**

### **A. Statement of Principal Clients and Users and Benefits Received:**

The Louisiana State Museum is a statewide educational institution that serves as a significant learning resource for the understanding and appreciation of Louisiana's cultural heritage for all citizens of and visitors to the State of Louisiana.

### **B. List of External Variables Over Which the Museum has no Control:**

- Economic conditions, including tourism trends, state budget conditions, population variances, etc.
- Political climate of the areas in which Museum properties exist which might affect tourism in those areas.
- Weather events which might threaten building structures or contents.

### **C. Statement of how duplication will be avoided when the operations of more than one program are directed at achieving a single goal, objective or strategy:**

The Louisiana State Museum is a single program that works out of a core base in New Orleans, supporting all branches of the program with a single administration and operations, thereby eliminating any possibility of duplication within the program.

### **D. Statement of how the indicators will drive management decisions and other agency processes:**

The performance indicators incorporated into the Office of State Museum's Strategic Plan all provide measures of how effectively it is presenting materials and/or reaching potential audiences. The indicators regarding AAM accreditation reflect the quality of Museum programming and management as it relates to standards set by a consensus of Museum professionals and experts. Deviation from the target goals in these indicator will alert management to the need to reassess program and exhibit quality, scholarship levels, and management techniques to evaluate how and why AAM standards are not being met.

If indicators are relating the attendance and audience numbers are not showing expected results, Museum management personnel will know that reassessment of programming and/or marketing strategies is needed. Combined with demographic information and surveys, management should have sufficient information to know what areas are lacking and what needs to be addressed, being mindful that external factors over which the Museum has no control may also be playing into the level of attendance at Museum properties.

### **E. Authorizations for each goal:**

R.S. 36:201, 207A, 208C, 209E, and 909; R.S. 36:851.1; R.S. 25:341-353; 25:831-846; 25:871-874

### **F. Program Evaluation used to develop objectives and strategies:**

The Office of State Museum understands the enormous responsibility it has to protect and conserve the historic buildings and collection items entrusted to it. The State Museum constantly evaluates, surveys, and studies ways to accomplish its mission in a more efficient and cost effective manner,

while maintaining the quality of exhibits and programming. The results of these evaluation processes were used to develop the objectives and strategies identified in this Strategic Plan.

Gallery attendants and volunteer docents solicit the reactions of Museum customers to exhibitions and programs. Trip Advisor and other travel resources are used continuously to adjust areas and improve the experience for visitors as outlined in their reviews. The Museum conducts a number of surveys of various segments of its audience.

Professional Museum organizations and similar State agencies are studied and evaluated constantly to determine the state of the art in history museums in order to be on the cutting edge. The Museum encourages staff professionals to build rapport with colleagues through membership and participation in professional associations and organizations.

## **G. Primary Beneficiaries**

The Museum currently maintains and operates twelve properties, 9 of which are historic properties statewide and a collection of artifacts which are made available to the citizens of Louisiana, students and scholars through exhibitions, publications, formal educational programs, symposia, lecture series, media, and Internet projects. The State Museum functions as Louisiana's cultural treasury supporting Louisiana's cultural identity for all Louisianans and the state's many visitors.

The properties of the State Museum represent Louisiana's architectural heritage dating back to 1788.

Nine of the Louisiana State Museum buildings are national historic landmarks: The Cabildo, Jackson House, Arsenal, Creole House, Presbytere, Lower Pontalba Building, Madame John's Legacy, the Old U.S. Mint located in New Orleans, and the E.D. White Historic Site located in Thibodaux. Consequently, the Louisiana State Museum is one of the largest protectors of historically significant properties in the United States. The three remaining buildings, the Collections Facility in New Orleans, and the Wedell Williams Memorial Aviation and Cypress Sawmill Museum in Patterson and the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest History Museum in Natchitoches are of regional and local significance. A final museum in Baton Rouge, Capitol Park Museum, is managed by the Louisiana State Museum, but the building is managed by the Division of Administration through the Office of Buildings and Grounds. Within these historic (and other) facilities the Museum preserves, researches and exhibits a large collection of Jazz, decorative arts, folk art, fabric and textiles, science and technology, aviation, visual arts and historical manuscripts, prints, maps, and historic photographs illustrating the history and culture of Louisiana.

The State Museum is headed by the Museum Director, who also serves as Assistant Secretary of the Office of State Museum, an agency within the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism.

Clearly the irreplaceable collections of the Louisiana State Museum are most important. The security, preservation and availability of these priceless pieces for the people of the State of Louisiana, as well as visitors to the State, dictate the need for the statewide Louisiana State Museum program, primarily benefiting the citizens of the State of Louisiana but the greater national and international community as well.