

# NATIONAL MUSEUM EDUCATION POLICY

**President of Brazil**

Michel Temer

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Marcelo Mattos Araujo

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Renata Bittencourt

**Director of the Department of Diffusion, Sponsorship and Museum Economy**

Eneida Braga Rocha de Lemos

**Director of the Department of Planning and Management**

Denio Menezes da Silva

**General Coordinator of Museum Information Systems**

Alexandre Cesar Avelino Feitosa

**Brazilian Institute of Museums**

Address:

Setor Bancário Norte, Quadra 02, Bloco N, 13º andar

Brasília/DF Brazil

70040-020

Phone:

+55 (61) 3521-4404/4403

Websites:

[www.museus.gov.br](http://www.museus.gov.br)

[pnem.museus.gov.br](http://pnem.museus.gov.br)

**Organization:**

Coordination of Social Museology and Education

Cinthia Maria Rodrigues Oliveira

**Technical Staff**

Dalva Oliveira de Paula

Danilo Alves de Brito

Joana Regattieri Adam

Juliana Vilar Ramalho Ramos

Kim Rafael Lima Carvalho Teixeira de Albuquerque

Maria das Graças Rocha Gonçalves Silva

Mônica Padilha Fonseca

Raquel Fuscaldi Martins Teixeira

Renata Silva Almendra

Sandro dos Santos Gomes

Vitor Rogério Oliveira Rocha

Vivian de Oliveira Cobucci

**Workgroup Coordinators**

Daniele de Sá Alves

Diego Luiz Vivian

Diogo Guarnieri Tubbs

Fernanda Santana Rabello de Castro

Isabel Maria C. de Sanson Portella

Kátia Regina de O. Frecheiras

Ozias de Jesus Soares

Rafaela Gomes Gueiros R. de Lima

Rita Matos Coitinho

**Adviser**

Luciana Conrado Martins

**Translation**

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo

Diogo Henrique Franklin de Carvalho

# INTRODUCTION

The National Museum Education Policy (PNEM in the Portuguese acronym) is a set of principles and guidelines intended to inform educational practices in museological institutions, strengthening the educational dimension in all museum spaces and supporting educators' activities.

The National Museum Education Policy stems from a process of participatory construction started at the 1st Meeting of Educators of the Brazilian Institute of Museums (Ibram), in 2010, which gave rise to the National Museum Education Program and culminated in the 2nd National Meeting of the National Museum Education Program, part of the VII National Museums Forum, held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 2017.

The National Policy is the result of a collective work by civil servants at the Brazilian Institute of Museums; museum professionals throughout Brazil, especially educators; the museum educators networks; teachers and professors; students; and museum users. The establishment of a public policy resultant of such process is a historical landmark that confirms the maturity of the educational work of Brazilian museums. Coincidentally, the policy is launched while we celebrate the 90th anniversary of the first educational office in a Brazilian museum, at the National Museum, in Rio de Janeiro.

Museum education has been an important field of work and research for Brazilian museums seeking to accomplish their mission. Professionals have come a long way until the adoption of a definition of museum education, as stated in the first principle of the National Policy: a 'multidimensional process of theory, practice and planning, in permanent dialogue with museums and society'.

It is our intention that this guideline document strengthens and supports the educational practice in Brazilian museums.

National Museum Education Program Staff Team



# METHODOLOGY

In November 2012, the Brazilian Institute of Museums (Ibram) started the consultation process to the participative development of a National Museum Education Program (*Programa Nacional de Educação Museal*, or PNEM), motivated by the Charter of Petrópolis – final document of the 1st Meeting of Educators of Ibram Museums, which took place at the Imperial Museum, in 2010.

The first stage took place online, on forum discussions at the PNEM Blog ([pnem.museus.gov.br](http://pnem.museus.gov.br)). During the four-month discussion – from December 2012 to April 2013 – more than 700 participants signed up and brought contributions to debates and proposals regarding different aspects of the educational practice in museums. Many moderators contributed to dynamize discussions in their home states and cooperated with working group coordinators, represented by Ibram civil servants working on the topics of each group. The nine WGs' topics were:

- Conceptual Perspectives;
- Management;
- Museum Education Professionals;
- Education, Training and Qualification;
- Networks and Partnerships;
- Studies and Research;
- Accessibility;
- Sustainability; and
- Museums and Community.

Discussions were so productive that they could be taken as a point of departure for proposing guidelines, strategies and actions for the Program. A compilation of those proposals led to the PNEM Preliminary Document. The topic Communication was included, and ten working groups were then set up.

The Preliminary Document set the basis for the second stage of the public consultation procedure. Twenty-three regional meetings were held in 13 states,

mainly through partnerships with museum educators networks. The participants proposed changes to the guidelines, as well as new ideas for strategies and actions. The next step was the first National Meeting of the PNEM, during the VI National Museums Forum, in Belém (2014). At this point, the participants did not compile the proposals from the regional meetings. They instead established the Principles of Museum Education, based on content produced by the Conceptual Perspectives working group, and expressed in the final document of the meeting, the Belém Charter, the demand to move forward the consultation process until the institution of a National Museum Education Policy.

Challenged to conclude this process in face of a large number of contributions and hundreds of new proposals, a task force was set up to recompile the contents of the documents elaborated during the PNEM construction process, maintaining the democratic processes of consultation and participation for museum educators and civil society in the elaboration, implementation and evaluation of the new policy. After an extensive study carried out by the PNEM staff in partnership with the consultant Luciana Conrado Martins, it was understood that the PNEM final document had to be concise and accurate in order to inform professionals working in the field of museum education. Although a very long document would be more complete and cater for more complex demands, it would also fail to put into focus the main claims of the education field. It was also considered that the proposed actions and strategies would be implemented according to the reality of different regions, institutions and processes, always taking the policy guidelines as standard directives.

The 2nd National Meeting of PNEM took place during the VII National Museums Forum, held in 2017 in Porto Alegre, and the final document of the National Museum Education Policy was presented. The document is structured in three blocs – "Management"; "Professionals, training and research"; and "Museums and society" – unfolded in 18 guidelines derived from amends and complements to the original guidelines suggested during the Regional Meetings. After two days of discussion, the plenary meeting approved the final document of the National Museum Education Policy, which maintained the three blocs and approved 19 guidelines.

After the National Museums Forum, the National Museum Education Policy Booklet was published. It brings a detailed account of the participatory construction of this policy, including guiding and conceptual texts and recording

the whole range of proposed strategies and actions. The Booklet can be used not only as a reference, but also as a management tool for education professionals.

# PRINCIPLES

- 1.** To establish museum education as a role of museums, recognized by law and elicited in the guiding documents, as well as preservation, communication and research.
- 2.** Museum education comprises a multidimensional process of theory, practice and planning, in a permanent dialogue with museum and society.
- 3.** To guarantee that each institution have a museum education section, composed by a qualified, multidisciplinary team, equivalent in the organization chart with other technical sectors of the museum, with a proper budget allocation and participation in decision-making spaces.
- 4.** Each museum shall build and systematically update its Educational and Cultural Program, understood as an educational policy, aligned with the Museological Plan, taking into account the institutional characteristics and its different audiences, explaining the concepts and theoretical and methodological references that underpin the development of educational actions.
- 5.** Considering the concept of Integral Heritage, to ensure that museums are spaces for education and the promotion of citizenship, and that they cooperate for regional and local development, in a coordinated fashion among its many sections.

# GUIDELINES

## **BLOC I - Management**

1. To encourage the museum education section to establish an Educational and Cultural Program, understood as an educational policy, based on the museum's mission, in collaboration with other museum sections and society.
2. To promote the development of the Educational and Cultural Program within the Museological Plan and to establish among its attributes: educational mission; theoretical and conceptual references; proficiency diagnosis; description of its projects and work plans; a permanent record, systematization and evaluation of its activities; and ongoing training of the museum personnel.
3. To foster funding, sponsoring and supporting mechanisms for museum education programs, projects and actions as a way of complementing their permanent budgetary allocation.
4. To incorporate contributions from museum education sections in museum programming and in the memory of the museum through the registration and dissemination of its actions.

## **BLOC II - Professionals, Training and Research**

1. To promote museum education professionals, encouraging specialized training and ongoing education for those working in the field.
2. To recognize among the attributions of the museum educator: the participative elaboration of the Cultural Educational Program; the research and analysis of topics of her competence; the implementation of educational programs, projects and actions; the register, compilation and evaluation of these programs; and the promotion of integral education.

3. To reinforce the role of museum education professionals, establishing their responsibilities in the Educational and Cultural Program in consonance with the National Museum Education Policy.
4. To stimulate the exchange of experiences through national and international partnerships for carrying out professional internships in museum education.
5. To amplify the specific knowledge of museum education with a view to strengthen the education field through the dissemination and promotion of completed projects, through the exchange of experiences between professionals and the support for the creation of university-level museum education courses.
6. To foster the exchange of experiences by means of national and international partnerships for professional internships in museum education.
7. To enhance museum education research in museums and in the context of museum processes, recognizing the educational knowledge produced in those spaces.
8. To promote the development and diffusion of field-specific research by coordinating museum education sectors in museums and science agencies, universities, and other institutions.
9. To collaborate with other museum sectors in promoting analyses, evaluations and audience research to ascertain whether its social and educational roles are being adequately performed.

## **BLOC III - Museums and Society**

1. To stimulate the cooperation between public and private educational organizations, promoting the dissemination of museum education, in consonance with the National Policy for Museum Education, with a view to integral education.

- 2.** To encourage and support the creation and strengthening of museum education professional networks, with a view to coordinating, expanding and publicizing the profession and the field of museum education.
  
- 3.** To promote full accessibility in museums, encouraging initial and ongoing training of museum educators for the development of accessible educational programs, projects and actions.
  
- 4.** To stimulate, promote and support environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability in educational programs, projects and actions, with due regard to the characteristics, needs and interests of local populations, ensuring the preservation of diversity and of natural and cultural heritages, the promotion of sociocultural memory and the strengthening of solidary economy.
  
- 5.** To further educational programs, projects and actions in collaboration with communities, aiming at sustainability and encouraging collective reflection and the construction of critical thinking.
  
- 6.** To stimulate and expand the exchange of experiences between museums and society, encouraging the use of new technologies, new media and digital culture.

# THE PORTO ALEGRE CHARTER

The 2<sup>nd</sup> National Meeting of the National Museum Education Program took place at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul in June 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017, during the VII National Museums Forum, bringing to a conclusion the consultation process to propose the National Museum Education Policy (PNEM).

This meeting fulfills a historical claim of the education field and starts a new and equally important stage: that of following up and implementing the defined guidelines.

From now on, PNEM is the guiding document for individuals and institutions concerning museum education. Our challenge is to enforce the principles and guidelines of the final document and put them into practice, under the guidance of Ibram and other public authorities responsible for implementing public policies for museums.

To this end, museum educators and other participants of the 2<sup>nd</sup> PNEM Meeting, gathered today, specify as necessary steps for developing the National Policy:

- To publish the National Policy for Museum Education Booklet, with the detailed contents of the proposal, a glossary, a record of its construction process and ideas for its implementation.
- To conduct research about the current stage of development of museum education in Brazil, under the guidance of Ibram and with the collaboration of museum educator networks and PNEM contributors.
- To convene the 1<sup>st</sup> National Meeting of Museum Education before the VIII National Museums Forum, in order to discuss the development and implementation of the National Museum Education Policy, concepts and practices in the education field.

- To secure spaces for discussing museum education topics at the National Museums Forums.
- Encouraging regional seminars for the discussion and implementation of PNEM in a partnership with museum educator networks and regional contributors of the National Museum Education Program.

Porto Alegre, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017.

## Signatories of the Porto Alegre Charter:

Aline A. S. da Silva  
Angelo R. Biléssimo  
Átila Tolentino  
Cinthia Oliveira  
Cristine Pieske  
Dalva de Paula  
Daniele de Sá Alves  
Danilo Melo  
Denilson Antônio  
Diego L. Vivian  
Diogo Tubbs  
Dora Medeiros  
Felipe Tenório  
Fernanda Castro  
Fernanda Maziero Junqueira  
Fernando Antônio Neto Lobo  
Isabel Portella  
Janaina Melo  
Jezulino Lúcio Mendes Braga  
Joana Ragattieri Adam  
João Pedro Rodrigues da Conceição  
Jocenaide M<sup>a</sup> Rosseto  
José do Nascimento Jr.  
José Nascimento  
José Rui Guimarães Mourão  
Juliana M. L. Pons  
Junio F. Lima  
Kátia Frecheiras  
Leandro Nery Nunes  
Luciana Conrado Martins  
Luiza de Souza Lima Macedo  
Magaly Cabral

Manuelina Maria Duarte Cândido  
Márcia Vargas  
Maria Helena G. Carvalho Tavares  
Maria Iraci S. Monetiro  
Maristela Simão  
Milene Chiovatto  
Moises Bezerra de Moraes  
Mona Nascimento  
Mônica Padilha Fonseca  
Natália Maranhão  
Newton Fabiano  
Ozias de Jesus Soares  
Paola Haber Maues  
Paulo Roberto Melo Sousa  
Paulo Roberto Sangos Pontes  
Rafaela Gueiros  
Renata Bittencourt  
Ricardo Ridrigues  
Rita de Cássia Oliveira Valle  
Ruival F. Melo  
Sidney Gonçalves do Vale  
Thomas Xavier Carneiro  
Vitor Rocha  
Wellington Ricardo